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Hafa Adai!

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75¢

Customs staves off airport fee hike

By ERWIN ENCINARES
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REPORTER

The Division of Customs has opted to stave off for an unmentioned amount of time the 700-percent increase in airport fees airlines have to pay per passenger every time they use the Francisco C. Ada-Saipan International Airport.

Department of Finance, the government agency that looks over the Division of Customs, told *Saipan Tribune* last week that they would delay the implementation of the airport fee hike and first seek comments.

According to Finance Secretary Larissa Larson, the $1 airport fee hike to $7 would be delayed.

See CUSTOMS on Page 4

Groups ask court to enforce order to compel Navy, Defense

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The four environmental and preservation groups have requested the federal court to enforce its February 2018 order that compels the U.S. Department of Navy and the U.S. Department of Defense to add addi-

See GROUPS on Page 4

CNMI's 1st agri-tourism, plant export company breaks ground

FERDIE DE LA TORRE
Rowina O. Torres, owner of Rufina LLC, and her husband, attorney Vincent DLG. Torres, and Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, and Saipan Mayor David Apatang (partly hidden) lead the shoveling of white sand to complete the groundbreaking rites for the CNMI's first agri-tourism and plant export company located across airport field in As Lito yesterday afternoon.

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The first agri-tourism and plant export company in the CNMI broke ground yesterday afternoon, marking the start of construction for the project at the 20,000-square-meter land across the airport field in As Lito.

Owned by Rowina O. Torres' Rufina LLC, Rufina Tropicals will offer a tour walk into a tropical jungle, which will showcase the island's local plants, trees, flowerings, edible fruits, and others.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres served as the speaker at the ceremony. The governor is the brother of Rowina Torres' husband, attorney Vincent

See AGRI-TOURISM on Page 4

Kilili to Legislature: End tax on Earned Income Tax Credit

Delegate Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan (Ind-MP) is calling on the Legislature to stop taxing Marianas families that are eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit. Commonwealth Public Law 11-25 currently slaps a 100-percent tax on any of the credit that could be refunded Marianas taxpayers.

"The estimate is $16 million would be refunded to taxpayers each year, if the Legislature repealed this law," Sablan said.

"With Commonwealth revenues reported to be at an all-time high, now is the time to put more money in the hands of our working families."

See KILILI on Page 4

INSIDE

LOCAL
Nursing graduate Maria Louise Gabriela Marinas Artero is the latest successful passer of the National Council Licensure Examination.

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Foreign trade
Opinions by party indentification
Opportunity for economic growth
Republicans 68%
Independents 71%

NATION
President Donald Trump's move to impose tariffs on imported steel is meant to protect an industry that employs about 140,000 Americans.

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ASIA
When Joanna Demafelis' indebted family needed money to fix their typhoon-battered home, she followed in the footsteps of millions of other Filipinos and left to find work overseas.

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SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

Local

Busy month for MMAC teams

March is gearing up to be a very busy month for teams participating in the Marianas March Against Cancer as teams have events lined up for the community to participate in the fight against cancer.

"Our teams have been very proactive this year, initiating fundraisers and garnering a lot of support from our community. March is shaping up to be an active month with events happening within the first week alone," said MMAC 2018 Committee chair Bobby Cruz.

On Thursday, March 1, Team Bodig held a coin drive at the Atkins Kroll Toyota Intersection from 4pm to 6pm. They will be holding their next coin drive on Thursday, March 15, at the same time, same location.

On Friday, March 2, the Commonwealth Cancer Association had a roadside waving and a free health walk from Garapan Fishing Base to Quartermaster Road as part of Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month.

Also that day at 6pm, Team Faiyé held a happy hour fundraiser at the Carolinian Utt in Garapan until 10pm. Entry is $20 and came with two free drinks, free chaser, and live entertainment.

On Saturday, March 3, Team IPI Dolphins (the combined team of Imperial Pacific International LLC and Marianas High School) held their Sunset Happy Hour fundraiser from 6pm to 10pm at the Saipan Seaside BBQ and Grill next to the former Cabrera Center on Beach Road.

On Friday, March 16, Team PSS/SPC (Public School System Central and Saipan Paddling Club) will be holding a coin drive at the Atkins Kroll Toyota intersection from 4pm to 6pm.

On Saturday, March 24, Team IT&E/SSHS (IT&E and Saipan Southern High School) will be holding its first annual Race for Life. The event features an exciting island scavenger hunt. More details to be provided soon.

As March aims to be a busy month for MMAC, April is beginning to look like one too as several teams have events lined up as well.

On April 13, Team NMC/LDTF (Northern Marianas College and the Lady Diann Torres Foundation) will have a fundraising booth at the always exciting NMC Charter Day from 4pm to 10pm.

Also that day, Team Talaabwogh Stars will be holding a happy hour fundraiser at Joe's Bar. More details to be provided soon.

In mid-April, Team IPI Dolphins will be holding its second annual "Hits for Hope" Softball Tournament. More details will be provided later.

Team NMC/LDTF will also be holding its second annual Brunch for a Cure on Sunday, April 29, at Giovanni's at the Hyatt Regency Saipan. More details to come.

There are also several teams with special ongoing fundraising efforts.

Team Triple J Lancherus (Triple J and Chacha Oceanview Middle School) will be donating $1 for every iced tea or drink special sold at the Triple J family of restaurants: Tony Roma's, Capriciossa, Truong's, Surf Club, and Bubba Gump. They will also be donating $25 for every vehicle sold in the Triple J dealership.

Team NMIFA (Northern Mariana Islands Football Association), in collaboration with Shirley's Coffee Shop, will be donating 10 cents for every iced tea sold in the restaurant's Susupe and Garapan locations.

"We are really moving this year, and our teams are working very hard not just for the team competition, but because this event means so much to so many people. It is a collective effort to supporting our loved ones and fighting cancer in our islands. It is also never too late to sign up or join a team," said MMAC 2018 Committee vice chair Carline Sablan.

For more information or to sign up your team for the 2018 Marianas March Against Cancer, email mmacteams@gmail.com or follow the Marianas March Against Cancer Facebook page at facebook.com/MMAC2018. ***(PR)***

LOTTERY

PACIFIC GOLD

RESULTS

Draw # 3821 Draw Date 3/3/2018

Winning Numbers

45 21 2 36 29 35

This Game 75 CNMI WINNERS!

Next Weeks Jackpot $2 MILLION

MarPac donates over $2,500 for NMC golf tournament

Marianas Pacific Distributors, or MarPac, donated over $2,500 in cash and beverages for NMC's Annual Golf Tournament, which was held over the past weekend.

The donation included over $1,200 in ice coffee, assorted beer, and golf gift items.

The 15th Annual NMC Foundation Open Golf Tournament was held last Saturday, March 3, at the west course of the Saipan Laolao Bay Golf & Resort.

"MARPAC's continuing support is important to us," said NMC president Dr. Carmen Fernandez. "We are grateful for the company's contribution."

The golf tournament is the NMC Foundation's signature event that raises funds to support NMC's academic programs and services.

"Having MarPac as a sponsor has always boosted the excitement of the event," said Mary Tenorio, NMC Foundation board chair. "We are grateful for the company's continued support." ***(PR)***

NMC

Marianas Pacific Distributors donated over $2,500 in cash, beverages, and gift items to the NMC Foundation. The donation includes ice coffee, an assortment of beers, and golf prizes. From left: Joelin Mettao, NMC student; Raymond Nakazato, NMC student; James Lee, MarPac Beverage Sales and Marketing manager; Dr. Carmen Fernandez, NMC president; Guy Pudney, MarPac resident manager; Frankie Eliptico, interim VP of advancement; Victoria Deleon Guerrero, NMC marketing coordinator; and Trina Santos, NMC student.

Tourism Topics

A bi-weekly update from the Marianas Visitors Authority

Tourism is everybody's business.

The Marianas | Saipan | Tinian | Rota |

HAFA ADAI & TIROW WAY

Marathon Registration Deadline on Mar. 8

Approximately 800 runners will take to the roads on Saturday (Mar. 10) for Saipan Marathon 2018 for either a 10K, Half Marathon, Full Marathon, or 50K Ultra Marathon. Runners are reminded to register by Thursday (Mar. 8). Also, dog owners are reminded to restrain their pets, and drivers are asked to exercise caution along the route on race day.

SAIPAN MARATHON 2018

The race will award over $22,000 in cash prizes. Participants may register www.webscorer.com by searching the race and registering as US & CNMI or INTERNATIONAL. The marathon is certified by the International Association of Athletic Federations (IAAF) through the Association of International Marathons and Distance Races (AIMS).

Major sponsors this year are Delta Airlines, the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands, DFS Saipan Limited, and Northern Marianas Athletics. Platinum sponsors are IT&E and Hyatt Regency Saipan. Gold sponsors are Ideal Signs and HK Express. Silver sponsors are Pacific Insurance, J.C. Tenorio Enterprises, Serenti Hotel, Hana Tour Service Inc., Taiwan Rainbow Wings Inc., BARREL (Korea), Saipan Beach Hotel, and Kanoa Resort.

Aid Stations will be manned by Mariana Resort & Spa, Kensington Hotel Saipan, Aqua Resort Club, Hyatt Regency Saipan, Imperial Pacific Int'l, Pacific Development Inc., Tasi Tours, Fiesta Resort & Spa, Kanoa Resort, Saipan World Resort, IT&E, Coral Ocean Golf Resort, and Pacific Islands Club Saipan. The event is also supported by Dept. of Public Safety, Dept. of Fire & Emergency Medical Services, Dept. of Public Works, Dept. of Public Lands, Div. of Parks & Grounds, Saipan Mayor's Office, Hawaiian Rock Products, and Marianas Health Services.

www.mymarianas.com

Anti-animal cruelty bill heads for the Senate

A recently approved bill that now heads to the CNMI Senate for similar adoption is being looked at as a tool against animal cruelty and it is being hoped that it would result in a drop in the number of animal negligence cases in the Commonwealth.

According to Saipan Cares for Animals president Beth Pliscou, more often than not, animals are brought into the Saipan Care for Animals office beaten half to death by their owners and nothing has really been done about it for years.

Rep. Edwin K. Propst's (Ind-Saipan) House Bill 20-24 is being looked at as the first of its kind in the CNMI that seeks to prevent the cruelty and theft of animals.

According to the bill, a person who intentionally mistreats, abandons, or neglects an animal will be guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to $500 and 250 hours of community service at an animal shelter.

The bill successfully passed the CNMI House of Representatives in early February and is on its way to the Senate.

The bill also protects law enforcers and allows them to enter private properties.

Pliscou said that, although she and her staff, together with the Saipan Mayor's Office, try their best to save and protect animals found in these kinds of situation, it was still common and it has only gotten worse over the years.

Pliscou is hopeful that the public will express support for the bill when the Senate takes it up.

The bill exempts livestock and cockfighting. ***(Kimberly A. Bautista)***

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Detention hearing for 2 of 4 suspects in 'ice' lab case continues today

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The federal court on Friday continued the hearing for the detention pending trial, to tomorrow, Tuesday, of two of the four men arrested in connection with an alleged clandestine methamphetamine lab on Saipan.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona postponed the detention hearing following the request of the counsels for defendants Vincent David Cabrera Jr. and Eugene Blas Repeki.

Assistant U.S. attorney Garth Backe, counsel for the U.S. government, informed the court that the prosecution was ready to proceed with the hearing.

Manglona

Defense counsel Benjamin Petersburg, the court-appointed counsel for Cabrera, however, stated they were not ready to proceed based on the U.S. Probation Office's report they received.

Steven Pixley, the court-appointed counsel for Repeki, stated he just received a number of documents that morning, Friday. Pixley joined in on Petersburg's request for additional time to prepare for the hearing.

Manglona remanded Cabera and Repeki into the custody of the U.S. Marshal and were subsequently returned to local custody under the Department of Corrections.

Meanwhile, the initial appearance hearing was held last Thursday against the two other defendants—Sidney Capelle Kani and Rick U. Omar Jr.

Manglona also set the detention hearing for Kani and Omar tomorrow, Tuesday, at 1:30pm, which is the same schedule for Cabrera and Repeki.

Manglona advised Kani and Omar of the charges in the criminal complaint against them and advised them of their constitutional rights.

U.S. Probation Officer Margarita Wonenberg informed the court that Kani refused to be interviewed by the Probation Office as to his financial status.

Wonenberg also informed the court that Kani does have a prior case.

Manglona advised Kani regarding interview by the Probation Office or he will have to hire his own attorney.

Kani then agreed to meet with the Probation Office for the interview after the hearing.

Kani and Omar were remanded into the custody of the U.S. Marshal pending further proceedings.

Cabrera Jr. and Repeki were the first to have been formally charged with conspiracy to manufacture methamphetamine and illegal possession of controlled substance before the District Court and the Superior Court.

Kani and Omar were charged with conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine.

U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration agents and CNMI Drug Enforcement Task Force and Customs officers arrested the four and searched the clandestine "ice" laboratory in a hotel room and at a Dandan home last Feb. 25.

GROUPS

From Page 1

tional four documents to the record in their lawsuit over the Navy's decision to relocate 5,000 U.S. Marines from Okinawa to Guam and to conduct live-training on Tinian and Pagan.

The groups, through counsel David L. Henkin of Earthjustice, and Kimberlyn K. King-Hinds, asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to order Navy and DOD immediately to begin the process of identifying, compiling and reviewing the documents the court identified in its Feb. 12 order as needed to complete the administrative record in this case.

In her Feb. 12 order, Chief Judge Ramona Manglona ordered the Navy, Navy Secretary Richard Spencer, DOD, and DOD Secretary James Mattis to compete the administrative record in this case within 30 days.

Manglona said the groups have adequately shown that the four disputed documents were considered by Navy and DOD in connection with the supplemental environmental impact statement about relocating Marines to Guam and therefore must be lodged as part of the record.

The four documents refer to the final training needs assessment dated April 2012 and revised in March 2013; final CNMI Joint Military Training Requirements and Siting Study dated January 2013 and revised March 2013; March 14, 2013 Federal Register notice announcing the Navy's intent to prepare the CNMI Joint Military Training; and the draft CNMI Joint Military Training EIS/overseas EIS dated April 2015.

The groups—Tinian Women Association, Guardians of Gani, Pagan Watch, and the Center for Biological Diversity—are suing defendants Navy, Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer, DOD, and DOD Secretary James Mattis for alleged violation of the National Environmental Policy Act and Administrative Procedure Act.

The groups claim that the Navy and DOD have violated NEPA and APA by failing to consider the relocation efforts and potential construction of live-fire training ranges on Tinian and Pagan as "connected actions" in a single environmental impact statement.

The groups then filed the motion to complete the administrative record, alleging that that the record is incomplete because the four documents and materials underlying these documents are not included.

The groups filed last Friday the motion to enforce the Feb. 12 order. Henkin asked the court to order defendants comply with the order to avoid prejudicial delay in reaching the merits of this case.

Henkin said the mere fact that defendants intend to seek reconsideration of the court's order to complete the administrative record does not give defendants license to ignore the court's command to compile the documents necessary to complete the record by the court-ordered March 14, 2018 deadline.

Henkin said defendants' refusal to even to begin the process of gathering the missing record documents until after a ruling on their as-yet-unfiled motion for reconsideration is completely unjustified and would severely prejudice the groups by imposing lengthy delays in reaching the merits of this case.

Henkin said last Feb. 28, defendants' counsel responded that, until this court rules on their motion to reconsider, which will not occur until sometime after the March 14 deadline to complete the record, defendants will not make any effort to identify and gather any of the missing documents.

Henkins said while defendants are entitled to seek reconsideration of the court's order, to complete the record, they should not be permitted to further delay these proceedings by waiting until after a ruling on their motion even to begin the process of locating and reviewing the missing record documents.

CUSTOMS

From Page 1

"…Everything went through the proper process," said Larson, who added that the division had the authority to propose such hike. "There were very few comments on [the hike]. [Last Thursday], I met with representatives of the airlines and we discussed it, so for now we ask for them to submit their comments in two weeks and we would examine [it]," she continued.

She noted that a final decision would be made after the submission of comments and that there was no specific timeline for the airport fee hike.

Larson said the fees have not been touched since the 1990s.

"Over the course of the last couple of years, the administration as a whole has been looking at all its regulations, all its fees and everything," she said, adding that other fees such as drivers license fees, car registration fees, have also been studied as well.

The $7 airport fee was scheduled for implementation starting March 1, 2018. However, Larson said concerns brought by a number of the airlines encouraged the Division of Customs to delay the hikes.

"We've heard their concerns, and we are aware of the issues they've raised, so we would take that into account. We are partners with the airlines and we are all in this together," she said, without specifying the concerns.

Larson noted that all airlines were given two weeks to submit their comments.

AGRI-TOURISM

From Page 1

DLG Torres.

The $500,000 project is funded by Bank of Guam-SSBCI, Commonwealth Development Authority/Department of Commerce. R.E.A.L. Int'l Corp. is the contractor. Expected completion of the project is September 2018.

Imported plants will be showcased by a bridge that leads to a pond next to the Mother Mary Grotto and the St. Judge Gazebo, where tourists can take a break, take photos, and enjoy some of the tropical treats of the island like coconuts, mangoes, tangerines, dragon fruits, and many more.

Tina Tudela, finance manager of Rufina LLC, said one of the most important and prized parts of the project is the Botanical Park, which will be constructed at a 1,000-square-meter area in the front portion of the property.

"Because of the historic structures, we have decided to preserve its importance and turn it into a garden, a place for the public to come and enjoy, and feel the cool breeze," Tudela said.

Tudela said after the break, the tour leads into the Sansevieria Plantation that showcases all 18 species that Rufina Tropicals specializes in.

She said on Mondays and Tuesdays, tour guests will see the export process of cutting, packaging, and the shipping of the tropical flowers and their prized Sansevieria species.

"Tourists and our local community are greeted and treated to an island barbecue meal. Rufina Tropicals will also have a tropical café," Tudela said.

Since 2015, Rufina Tropicals has been in the business of exporting flowers all over the world.

"I would like to showcase to the world that our little island of Saipan can export beautiful flowers to the world," Rowina Torres said.

In fact, Rowina Torres said, they have been exporting flowers to New York, Pennsylvania, Florida, Washington, Alabama, and Idaho.

She said her flowers reach any home in the U.S. within seven days or less of shipment.

Rowina Torres shared her childhood experience with plants started because of her late mother's love for plants.

"My Mom Rufina who is joining us from heaven loved plants so much, she sings and talks to them," she said.

Rowina Torres said she is a full-time mother and wife and that she loves it.

"I have been planting flowers all around my house as a hobby," she said, explaining why she turned that passion into a business.

She said her mother-in-law, Mama Bibang, who believes in her talent, has been advising her for years to open any business because it will follow through.

"What makes this groundbreaking more special is that she is with us today. Mama Bibang, thank you for showing me the light and believing in me," Rowina Torres said.

"You see in planting, you get to plant a seed. Water it, nurture it, take good care of it. You watch it grow slowly to bloom flowers or fruits. It's such a beautiful feeling," she said.

From this beauty, Rowina Torres said, she realized that Saipan needs to showcase its tropical scenic landscape with tropical plants that are hidden in different parts of the island from the tourists.

KILILI

From Page 1

The EITC is available to U.S. citizens or green card holders who have paid jobs. A family of four, for instance, with earned income below $50,597, qualifies for a credit up to $5,616.

The credit is used first to zero-out any tax the family owes. Then, the rest is supposed to be paid to the family as a refund. But Commonwealth Public Law 11-25 takes away all of the refund by subjecting it to the 100-percent tax.

In a letter to Senate President Arnold Palacios (R-Saipan) and House Speaker Rafael Demapan (R-Saipan) on Friday, Sablan raised questions about the legality of the 100-percent tax law. Section 601 of the Marianas Covenant of Political Union with the United States requires that the Marianas income tax system mirror the federal tax system. The Earned Income Tax Credit is part of the federal system.

Covenant Section 601 also says the federal tax system will apply in the Marianas as it applies in Guam. And a 2001 Guam Supreme Court ruling found that the Government of Guam, which also has the mirror tax system, must pay taxpayers the EITC in full.

Sablan said the legality of Public Law 11-25 is not the real issue, however.

"The question the Legislature should consider is whether the appropriate public policy today is to make the EITC fully effective in the Marianas. I believe the answer is yes."

Sablan says because the Earned Income Tax Credit is only available to those who have jobs it is part of the overall strategy to increase the number of U.S. workers in the labor-force.

"Reinstatement of the Earned Income Tax Credit would do much to bring U.S. workers off the sidelines and into jobs in the Marianas and would tie in directly with the strategy behind my legislation, the Northern Mariana Islands U.S. Workforce Act, H.R. 4869.

"These workers would benefit individually; and the Marianas would reduce our economic dependence on foreign labor and lessen the uncertainties of being subject to federal immigration law," Sablan wrote to the Legislative leaders.

"Most important," Sablan added, "ending the tax on the Earned Income Tax Credit would lift household incomes and raise the standard of living for many of our families. ***(PR)***

NEWS BRIEFS

Sewer odor in Sadog Tasi, Puerto Rico, Lower Base, Garapan

There will be a sewage odor in the Sadog Tasi, Puerto Rico, Lower Base, and Garapan areas starting last Thursday, March 1, until Friday, March 30, 2018.

The Sadog Tasi Treatment Plant personnel will be removing accumulated sludge from the treatment plant site and hauling it to the landfill starting March 1, 2018, and continuing intermittently until March 30, 2018. Strong odor is expected as the pile is disturbed for transport and may persist until sludge removal is completed.

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. will work diligently to minimize any inconvenience to its customers. For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates. ***(PR)***

Torres signs House Local Bill 20-22 into law

On Friday, March 2, 2018, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres signed into law House Local Bill 20-22, which names the unnamed coral surfaced roads that turn off from Isa Drive in the As-Mahetog and Capitol Hil areas, just north of the Vestcor Village. Authored by Rep. Donald C. Barcinas, this bill becomes Saipan Local Law 20-20. ***(PR)***

Survivors, caregivers support meeting on Thursday

All people facing cancer, their family members, and caregivers are invited to the next Commonwealth Cancer Association support meeting on Thursday, March 8, 2018, starting at 5:30pm at the Hyatt Regency Saipan's Chamolinian Room. Guest speaker will be Helen C. Sablan, director, Medicaid Program, CHCC. To RSVP or for more information, call the CCA at 682-0050 or email at ccamarianas@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

Military training at Warning Area 517, FDM

ASAN, Guam—The U.S. military will conduct training at Warning Area 517 during the following dates and times:

- Midnight of March 5 to 7pm March 6
- March 8, from 7am to 7pm
- March 9, from 7am to 6pm
- March 10, from 6am to 6pm
- March 11, from 6am to 4pm

The military will also conduct training at the island of Farallon de Medinilla during the following dates and times:

- March 5, from 9am to 5pm
- March 6, from 7am to 7:30pm
- March 7-8, from 11am to 7:30pm
- March 9, from 10am to noon

It is recommended the general public, fishermen and marine tour operators monitor the Coast Guard broadcast notice to mariners for advisories.

W-517 is activated south of latitude 12° 40' 00"N. Santa Rosa Reef and Galvez Banks are open for public use.

The general location of the training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla will be in a 12-nautical mile radius of the island. ***(PR)***

Pizza fundraiser by Kagman PTSA

Kagman Schools PTSA are fundraising for the end of the school year celebration of Family Fun Day in June. Please support the fundraising effort by buying pizza at Pizza Hut in Gualo Rai on Monday, March 5, from 11am to 10pm. Orders must be from the regular menu. Be sure to tell your cashier when you order this is for pizza night! If you're a parent, you're a child probably got a flyer from school! Bring the flyer when you pick up or dine in. If you need a flier print from this address: https://goo.gl/hyrEy7.

Free USCIS workshop at Saipan library on March 8

Officers from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services will present a free event on March 8 at the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, starting at 5pm. They'll present a one-hour workshop covering immigration and the naturalization process. The public is invited to attend. This session is part of a larger USCIS initiative to help immigrants better understand the many services available. For more information, contact Sharon Rummery at (415)248-8873. ***(PR)***

Emergency water outage in As Perdido, Koblerville, As Lito

There was an emergency water service interruption in As Perdido, portions of Koblerville, and residents along As Lito Drive to Guangdong Hardware last week and repairs were expected to be completed by Friday evening.

CUC has recently made system improvements in these areas which resulted in an increase in water pressure. The cause of the interruption is due to leaks from deteriorating service connections. Customers should expect restoration of services soon after.

The southbound lane along Chalan Monsignor Martinez Road near Hollywood Video will be closed. The general public is advised to take alternative routes or to exercise caution when driving through this area.

For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates. ***(PR)***

Free business seminar for veterans & spouses

The CNMI Military/Veterans Affairs Office and the Small Business Development Center will be offering a free business seminar called "Reboot to Business" at Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan's Azucena Room on March 26, from 9am to 4pm, presented by Dennis Kwak, director, Veterans Business Outreach Center of the Pacific. To register, contact Velma Del Rosario at 664-2650 or visit https://sbavets.force.com/s/. ***(PR)***

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‘Saipan not immune to gun violence’

By BEA CABRERA
bea_cabrera@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Valentine’s Day school shooting at the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida reminds Saipan Community School principal Amanda Dunn of the gun rampage on Saipan in November 2009.

The 2009 tragedy, which claimed the lives of five people, showed that the CNMI is not impervious to gun violence, Dunn said.

“Our school became very aware of the reality that Saipan is not immune to the tragedies happening in the U.S. mainland when a gunman opened fire in two locations across the island of Saipan in 2009,” she said.

At the time, Dunn was a teacher at SCS and the school immediately went into lockdown to secure the safety of their students. “The reality that this is possible has stayed with us in our administrative decision-making,” she said.

Learning from the 2009 experience has made Dunn and her administrative and teaching staff hype-aware about preventing similar situations.

“I believe that immediate communication is a crucial part of managing any situation of such stature. Our school has an SCS Whole School live chat which connects all of our teachers and staff in real-time throughout the day to their phones, classroom computers, and iPads,” she said.

Dunn also said the Florida school system would have been helped by zeroing in on the alleged shooter.

Investigators have released a statement that Nikolas Cruz, the 19-year-old suspect in the Parkland shooting that killed 17 students and teachers, is battling mental health disorder.

Dunn said that breaking down the negative stigma that is built around mental health helps the students recognize emotions and the way they react to their environment.

“Successfully teaching students about emotional health includes children learning how to respect their emotions rather than feel embarrassed or inconvenienced by them, how to manage their emotions and act constructively and how to respond to other people’s emotional reactions,” she said.

Dunn said SCS is at the forefront of such teaching techniques.

“We are working to break down the negative stigma that is built around mental health and want to hear from those who have had a mental health disorder and want to share their story…for better understanding,” she said.

Dunn moved to Saipan 11 years ago and was comforted by the fact that guns were not something she would have to worry about, as they were not readily available in the CNMI.

“Whose role is it to prevent shootings in schools? Is it a job of the school or the government? I prefer to not answer as a principal but as a parent…I think that there is a role at every level, as it takes a village or community to raise a child, to be an effective member of a community,” she said. “Home is the first place where a child’s education begins, the church has a very important role, the school and the government also have different vital roles in the upbringing and protection of our children.”

In November 2009, Li Zhongren went on a shooting rampage in Kannat Tabla, killing at least four people, two children, and wounding eight tourists. He later killed himself with a self-inflicted gunshot wound in Banzai Cliff.

DYS hosts 14th Parent Leadership workshop

KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Department of Youth Services, in conjunction with Parents Anonymous Inc., hosted the 14th Annual Parent Leadership Development Workshop last Feb. 23 at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center.

Over 40 parent leaders were recognized at the event.

Every public school across the CNMI, including Tinian and Rota, were invited to nominate at least two parents who have shown outstanding leadership roles in school or the community.

According to Division of Youth Services administrator Vivian Sablan, the purpose of the workshop is not just to recognize the parents who have showcased exemplary leadership skills, but also to bring resources to parents and to community members who wish to avail of the leadership skills taught during the workshop.

Sablan said it was decided this year that the event would be held on a Friday instead of a Saturday and to cut the day short to maximize the amount of services delivered.

The workshop started at 8am and ended at 12pm with various divisions of the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs putting up exhibits and organizations showcasing their outreach programs. Other government and non-government groups also put up informational booths.

The workshop featured three different speakers who taught participants about outreach programs on Saipan, including parenting strategies, health and chronic diseases, emergency planning, and teen parenting. The featured speakers were Maternal and Child Health Bureau administrator Heather Pangelinan, Systems of Care and Child Behaviors lead therapist Kimberly Mendiola, and Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy Systems project specialist Tom Thornburgh.

A little over 130 parents were present for this year’s workshop. Breakfast, lunch, and snacks were provided. There was also a raffle for prizes.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net
NMHC EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY
OF
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FUNDS
FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2018

THIS ADVERTISEMENT IS PAID FOR BY NMHC WITH CPD FUNDS.

The Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, **through the** Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) is announcing the availability of an **estimated** $1,264,412.00 in Community Planning and Development (CPD) funds available from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. NMHC anticipates receiving an estimated amount of $902,206.00 in Community Development Block Grants (CDBG); $293,829.00 in Home Investment Partnerships (HOME); and, $68,377.00 in Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds for Program Year (PY) 2018.

The CDBG funds, authorized under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, may be used for a wide range of community development activities to revitalize neighborhoods, provide affordable housing, expand economic opportunities, and improve community facilities and services. However, use of these funds must meet at least one of the national objectives which include: 1) to benefit low and moderate-income families; 2) to eliminate slum or blight conditions; or 3) to meet other urgent community development needs.

The CDBG program requires a grant recipient to certify that it will minimize displacement of persons as a result of activities assisted with CDBG funds. The CNMI government does not plan on undertaking any activity which will cause displacement of person. In the event of any unforeseen displacement resulting from any CDBG funded activity, the CNMI government will comply with the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, its implementing regulation and applicable local law.

HOME funds may be used to create affordable housing through financing assistance, site acquisition or improvement, and rehabilitating existing residential dwellings as well as providing funds for new construction or purchase of a single family residential dwelling. Use of HOME funds must benefit low-income families.

ESG funds may be used to rehabilitate or convert to buildings into homeless shelters and for shelter operating expenses, supportive services and homeless prevention **and rapid re-housing** activities. Use of ESG funds must benefit the homeless.

Applications for the use of CPD funds are available for pick up at the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) located in Garapan, Saipan; San Jose Village, Tinian; and, Songsong Village, Rota, beginning January 03, 2018.

You may also obtain the application online at www.nmhcgov.net in the section titled “Public Notice/Announcement” subsection “Community Planning Development”

Applications must be submitted to the NMHC Offices in Garapan, Saipan (Saipan Residents); San Jose, Tinian (Tinian Residents); and, Songsong Village, Rota (Rota Residents) by ***April 06, 2018, no later than 4:30 p.m. Applications submitted after April 06, 2018, will not be accepted.***

A briefing will be conducted for interested applicants and for those applicants who have picked up an application for the use of CPD funds. The briefing will address the program requirements and regulations concerning the usage of CPD funds.

The schedules for briefing are as follows:

February 07, 2018, 6:00 p.m. for the island of Saipan
February 08, 2018, 6:00 p.m. for the island of Tinian
February 09, 2018, 6:00 p.m. for the island of Rota

We are encouraging all non-profit, for profit, and government service providers who are providing services to people with disabilities, homeless individuals, and emergency shelter administrators and operators to attend this briefing.

For residents living on the island of Saipan, the briefing will held at the NMHC Office in Garapan; Residents living on the island of Tinian, the briefing will be held at the NMHC Office in San Jose Village; and Residents living on the island of Rota, the briefing will be held at the Rota Mayor’s Office Conference Room in Tatachog.

Accommodations for disabled individuals or other non-English speaking individuals who wish to attend the briefing are available upon request by giving at least 24 hours notice prior to the meeting so that such needs can be arranged and provided. Additional inquiries, concerning the CPD program, may be directed to Ms. Zenie P. Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director or Mr. Jacob Muna, Planner/Environmental Officer at 234-6866 or 234-7689.

/s/
Jesse S. Palacios
Corporate Director

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NOTICE OF AUCTION

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC), as auctioneer and seller, hereby gives notice that all the rights, title and interests of NMHC in and to the following described real property will be sold at auction:

LOT NO.	PROPERTY LOCATION	MINIMUM BID
008 T 239	MARPO HEIGHTS, TINIAN	$73,000.00
021 T 15	SAN JOSE, TINIAN	$80,000.00
107 T 139	CAROLINAS HEIGHTS, TINIAN	$35,000.00

The auction will be open to the general public and will be held at NMHC’s conference room, Garapan, Saipan, at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, March 12, 2018 subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. Minimum Bid. The minimum acceptable bid for the properties are as indicated above.
2. Reserve. The auction sale shall be held with reserve.
3. Rights and Duties of NMHC as Auctioneer. Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable law of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales with reserve, NMHC shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the auction sale:
   a. To withdraw any property listed for sale in this announcement before sale or before a bid for such property is accepted.
   b. To adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any specific property is struck off, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and
   c. To reject any and all bids.
4. Bids. Tentative bids may be submitted in advance for the properties listed in this notice. Such bids shall not be binding, except that the highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the item. Bids may be entered in person, in writing, or by telephone to Mr. Jesse S. Palacios, Corporate Director, NMHC, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950; Telephone: 234-6866; Facisimile: 234-9021;
5. Deposit; Payment. A deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale by cash, cashier’s check or credit card (Visa or Mastercard). The remaining balance will be due within three (3) calendar days of the auction sale. Failure to make payment of the remaining balance within three (3) calendar days will result in forfeiture by the buyer of the ten percent (10%) deposit, and any and all of the buyer’s rights, title and interest in any of the aforementioned property will automatically revert to NMHC. Also failure to deposit the 10% of the purchase price on the same day will subject NMHC to award the winning bid to the next highest bidder. All auction terms and rules must apply to the next highest bidder.
6. Change of Terms. NMHC reserves the right to change any of the terms of conduct and enforcement of sale by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause, shall be binding on any buyer by constructive notice.
7. Inspection and No Warranty. Bidders are cautioned to inspect the title and property. The interests of NMHC in the property are being sold “AS IS” and without warranty. Failure to inspect the real property or any related documents will not constitute a ground for any claim, adjustment or rescission by any buyer.

Dated this 6th day of February, 2018.

/s/ Jesse S. Palacios,
Corporate Director

Torres signs $24M additional budget, PSS gets half

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres enacted last Thursday an appropriation bill that allocates over $24 million to several government agencies, while half goes to the Public School System.

Torres signed at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center Rep. Angel A. Demapan's (R-Saipan) House Bill 20-147 after extensive House and Senate amendments.

"Today is a good day," Torres said in an interview with *Saipan Tribune*. "[It] is a good day to distribute revenue from that we have seen across the islands," he said, adding that the revenue originated from the casino gross revenue tax for fiscal year 2017. "The more they succeed and the more funding we have, the more we can distribute."

The legislation highlights an $11.85-million allocation for PSS school repairs and upgrades and the purchase of instructional materials and school buses, while the remaining $150,000 is allocated to the Board of Education. The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. is allocated $2.75 million and will pay for the indigent care expenses of the hospital and its electronic healthcare records system.

A total of $4.5 million went to several land compensation judgments.

The Department of Lands and Natural Resources was allocated $60,000 for the coconut rhinoceros beetle intervention and prevention program on Tinian, Saipan, and the Northern Islands.

A total of $1 million is allocated to the Northern Marianas College, $375,000 to the Northern Marianas Trades Institute, $420,000 to the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs' Child Care Development Fund, $300,000 to the Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation Program, $420,000 to the Office of Planning and Development, $175,000 to the Office of Management and Budget, $150,000 to the CNMI Drug Court, among others.

Rota and Tinian gets $850,000 each for their Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, Rota Department of Public Safety, Rota land compensations, and Tinian road constructions.

Traditional knowledge helping create land records in Solomons

Rev. Thaba James Mason addressing the meeting.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

HONIARA, Solomon Islands—Meetings with leaders held in Kia two weeks ago confirm strong interest in proceeding with customary land recording of Barora Fa'a land in Isabel Province. There are currently no official government records regarding land ownership in Barora Fa'a, which has resulted in some disagreements and uncertainty.

As a way to resolve this uncertainty, leaders from the community have offered to undertake a formal customary land recording exercise under the guidance of the National Recorder and the Ministry of Lands, Housing & Survey. Using traditional knowledge to support the creation of official records will ensure that the community has ownership over the process, while still providing data essential for the official records.

The Barora Fa'a Interim Committee and the Zabana House of Chiefs met on February 19 and 20 and confirmed their interest and support for this project.

The meetings were convened by the Paramount Chief of Isabel, Rt. Rev. Thaba James Mason OBE, and also attended by a representative of the ministry, Land Reform director Hellen Ohukeni, a representative of the Prime Minister's office, national consultant for lands and commerce Leonard Rotu, and the Pacific Community chief technical adviser at the ministry Alan McNeil.

At the first day's meeting, the three Honiara-based representatives explained to landowners the process of land recording according to the Customary Land Records Act, and answered their questions.

The landowners were informed that SPC, with Australian government financial assistance, is willing to provide a recording officer to officially record the genealogies, representatives and boundaries of the Barora Fa'a land if the landowners wish to take this step.

It was noted at the meeting that much time had already been spent to record genealogies and landownership, including details that were agreed to at a convention held in 2016 and a land demarcation consultation meeting held in 2017. The general consensus at the meeting was that it is a very appropriate time for the national government with donor assistance to step in and assist with the formalization of land recording, as so much groundwork has already been completed and agreed.

The Prime Minister's Office representative, Leonard Rotu, was very encouraged at the feedback and outcome of the meeting in Kia. "The Solomon Islands government is very supportive of customary land recording and it is a policy priority of the SIDCC government," he said after the meeting. "Landowners have to initiate the consultations and recording proposals, before we can step in to assist, and we don't wish to override any agreements that have already been made between landowners" he added. "We will inform the Prime Minister's Office about the great progress being made in Isabel Province toward formal recognition of customary landownership and, in the meantime, we encourage landowners to continue to cooperate when the formal recording commences in order to ensure a smooth progression to official recording and potential registration of the Barora Fa'a land." ***(SPC)***

Kiska holds orange boat initiative in Chuuk

Santa Rita, GU—The U.S. Coast Guard cutter *Kiska*, home ported in Santa Rita, Guam, recently conducted community outreach in Chuuk State, Federated States of Micronesia following a weeklong search and rescue case.

Coast Guard Sector Guam conducted a rescue case of three fisherman that were located 85 nautical miles from Chuuk earlier last week. The missing vessel was found with high visibility orange paint received from a previous engagement the Coast Guard conducted in FSM.

To ensure continued success of this program, the *Kiska* conducted another orange boat initiative in Chuuk during their stay, which resulted in 35 vessels receiving high contrast orange interiors.

Since the program's first operational roll-out in the summer of 2015, over 400 privately-owned skiffs have orange interior paint schemes, greatly enhancing detectability by search aircraft.

The U.S. Coast Guard cutter *Kiska*, home ported in Santa Rita, Guam, recently conducted community outreach in Chuuk State, Federated States of Micronesia following a weeklong search and rescue case.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Through the assistance of the U.S. Embassy in FSM, the crew of the *Kiska* also participated in a local school restoration project, which provided them the opportunity to continue their strong relationship with the island community. ***(USCG)***

"A Tradition of Excellence!"

Dr. Dennis Williams, a renowned eye surgeon, continues the tradition of excellence at Marianas Eye Institute.

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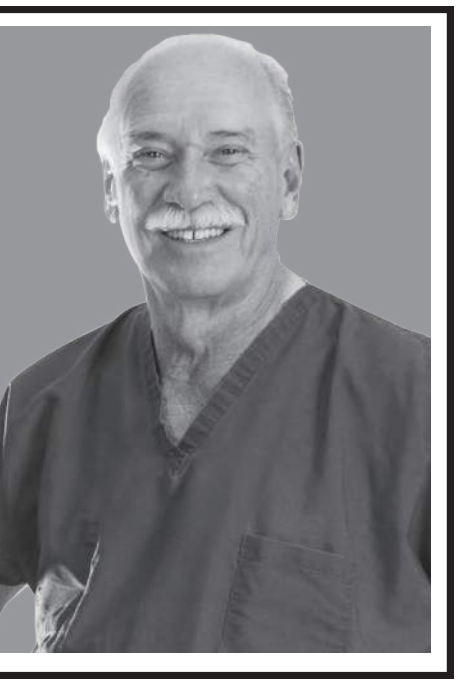

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC §9910, the State Rehabilitation Council will hold a Special Meeting on Friday, March 9, 2018 at the Kanoa Resort-Latte Stone Room (Saipan) from 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Interested individuals are welcome to attend.

AGENDA

I. **Call to Order**

II. **Roll Call**

III. **Review and Adoption of Agenda of March 9, 2018**

IV. **New Business**
a. Public Comments on VR Portion of the Unified State Plan Amendments for PYs 2018-2019

V. **Action Items:**
a. Ratify/Approval of Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment Report for FYs 2014-2017
b. Review/Approval of VR Portion of the Unified State Plan Amendments for PYs 2018-2019

VI. **Consumer Forum**

VII. **Miscellaneous/Announcements**

VIII. **Adjournment**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend the meeting but require accommodation such as large print or sign language interpreter, are asked to call Elvira Seman at 322-6537/38 (voice) or 322-6549 (TTY) no later than Tuesday, March 6, 2018.

/s/ ELIZABETH S. ADA, Chairperson

This advertisement is paid for with Federal funds made possible by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Judiciary Administrative Office
Guma' Hustisia · Iimwal Aweewe · House of Justice
P.O. Box 502165 · Saipan MP 96950
T: (670) 236-9715 · F: (670) 236-9702

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Judiciary is seeking a highly motivated individual for the position of:

DEPUTY MARSHAL I (Rota)
Announcement # JVA18-21
On the island of ROTA

DUTIES: The successful candidate will work under the Chief Justice and under the direct of the Chief Marshal in the Marshal Service Division on Saipan which involves the enforcement and execution of judicial orders and assigned law enforcement duties. The duties of this position include, but are not limited to the following:

- Performs enforcement and execution of court orders and service documents such as jury summons;
- Performs court security duties required for judicial proceedings, protection of justices, judges, court staff, clients, jurors, witnesses, and judicial facilities; assists in the operation of the court's security control monitoring systems;
- Conducts inspection and screening of all persons entering the courthouse and prohibits the entrance onto the court's premises of any items that are restricted or prohibited; provides the public with direction and information on all public services locations within the courthouse;
- Prepares written reports of service and non-service documents, incidents, and other reports as required;
- Performs prisoner handling while awaiting court hearings; escorts prisoners to courtrooms and to holding cells as directed;
- Has knowledge of and follows courtroom directives;
- Completes annually all required training including firearms; complies to all procedures relative to the proper use, maintenance, and security of government issued firearms; and
- Performs other duties on the courthouse premises as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS: Candidate must have a high school diploma or equivalent, a minimum of two (2) years experience in law enforcement and/or one year college level education in criminal justice or related field of study. Successful candidate must provide current police and traffic clearances and proof of eligibility to work in the CNMI. Must have a valid drivers' license and operate a court vehicle. Applicants given a conditional offer of employment with the CNMI Judiciary will be required to submit to urinalysis to screen for the illegal use of drugs prior to employment.

COMPENSATION AND TENURE: This is an ungraded position appointed and served at the pleasure of the Chief Justice. The salary will be $20,000 annually.

INTERESTED PERSONS may obtain application forms at the Judiciary Administrative Office at the Guma Hustisia/Iimwal Aweewe/House of Justice in Susupe, or at the Superior Court offices on Tinian and Rota. Completed applications, cover letter, and three references should be submitted to:

Human Resources
Guma Hustisia/Iimwal Aweewe/House of Justice
P.O. Box 502165
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel. (670)236-9818
Fax. (670) 236-9702
michelle.guerrero@justice.gov.mp

This job announcement will remain open until filled. Also, this job announcement can be seen and a printable copy of the application downloaded at http://www.justice.gov.mp.

THE CNMI JUDICIARY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER.

Nursing graduate Artero passes NCLEX

By BEA CABRERA
bea_cabrera@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

BEA CABRERA

"I decided to take the NCLEX earlier than usual because I was challenged when a lot of my classmates were passing. My mentality was if this person can do it, then I can do it too," Maria Louise Gabriela Marinas Atrero said.

Nursing graduate Maria Louise Gabriela Marinas Artero is the latest successful passer of the National Council Licensure Examination and is the 10th registered nurse from her cohort at the Northern Marianas College.

Artero was part of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. financial assistance program wherein she was contracted to work for CHCC for a year after graduating in May last year, take the NCLEX, and work for another two years at the hospital after passing.

"I decided to take the NCLEX earlier than usual because I was challenged when a lot of my classmates were passing. My mentality was if this person can do it, then I can do it too," she said.

"I was supposed to take it last year, but fear and anxiety kept me from not doing it. But I realized that I cannot let fear keep me from being unlicensed so I took it last Friday (Feb. 23) and the results came out this week," she added.

Artero said her participation in the CHCC financial assistance program helped her a lot during her review.

"Being part of the program helped me lot. I realize that there are three types of learners— hands-on learners, kinesthetic learners, and auditory and visual learning. I am a little bit of all three but I am a little more kinesthetic," she said.

Kinesthetic or tactile learning is a learning style in which learning takes place with the students carrying out physical activities, rather than listening to a lecture or watching demonstrations.

"As a student, you get hands-on experience but the clinical part is just once a week. As a graduate nurse working at CHCC, you basically do things as a registered nurse, but you need to be cosigned and supervised with most things," she added.

Artero learned a lot more as a graduate nurse under the program than just being a student nurse. "As a graduate nurse, there was more hands-on work and we read books on our days off and this balance helped me a lot," she said.

"My training was two years of pre-nursing, two years of nursing, then a graduate nurse at CHCC, and now that I passed the NLCEX, I am happy to achieve registered nurse status," she said.

CHCC CEO Esther Muña said that working with graduates like Artero is one of the hospital's cherished investments.

"We are very proud and elated at Maria's success. We developed this program for our graduate nurses as we recognized the challenges the individuals have with the goal of becoming an RN while supporting their families. As an employer, it is critical that we support the nursing program from start to finish and even after they graduate with their nursing degree," she said.

"This is an investment in our workforce and an investment in the health of our community. We are looking forward to more successes from NMC and CHCC. CHCC supports all our nurses," she added.

After Artero gets her official license, she looks forward to working at CHCC for two years and beyond.

"Growing up I've been meaning to work here at CHCC because I wanted to give back to the community and Saipan is my home and I don't plan on living somewhere else unless I have to. Overall, I see myself living on Saipan," she said. "When I told people I wanted to be a nurse, the initial reaction was 'oh that's hard,' but after you've passed that point of the physical and mental challenge, everything is worth it."

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PUBLIC NOTICE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
Koblerville Gymnasium Operation

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) is soliciting for proposals from qualified and established organizations and agencies to operate the Koblerville gymnasium.

The proposal packets are available at the NMHC Central Office Saipan located in Garapan during regular business hours from Monday thru Friday except CNMI Holidays beginning February 9, 2018.

A mandatory pre-proposal meeting will be held on February 23, 2018 at 10 a.m. at the NMHC Central Office Conference Room. Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing or email to Mr. Jesse S. Palacios, Corporate Director, NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, faxed to (670)234-9021, or email to jjmuna@nmhc.gov.mp.

The proposal would be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Qualification and Experience: 30%
2. Organization and Capacity: 30%
3. Financial Capacity: 20%
4. Response to RFP: 20%

Proposers must seal and mark their proposals "NMHC Koblerville Gymnasium". Proposers must submit one (1) original and two (2) copies of sealed proposal and submitted to the NMHC Corporate Director, Garapan, no later than 10:00 a.m. on March 12, 2018.

The NMHC reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and waive any defects in the said proposals, if in the sole opinion of NMHC, to do so would be in its best interest. All proposals become the property of the Government.

For more information, please contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Planner at (670) 234-7689/6866 during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/
Jesse S. Palacios
Corporate Director

USCIS' Mathur at SHRM meeting

The Society for Human Resource Management-CNMI Chapter will be holding a special meeting on Thursday, March 8, featuring community relations officer Kamana Mathur of USCIS Pacific District.

This meeting will offer an opportunity to members to receive training from Mathur on how to properly complete the Form I-9 and a discussion of the documents that can be accepted as part of the Form I-9 process.

Highlights of the presentation will include:

- How to properly complete each section of the Form I-9
- Proper re-verification procedures
- How to make corrections to the Form I-9
- Proper procedures for accepting documents in the Form I-9 process
- Procedures to avoid allegations of discrimination in the Form I-9 process
- Helpful online resources

Mathur

Mathur's position involves meeting members of the community and providing them with immigration related information and taking back issues presented by the community to USCIS leadership to be appropriately addressed.

Prior to joining USCIS, Kamana practiced immigration law in Pittsburgh, and taught at Chatham and Carnegie Mellon universities.

She also served as a foreign service officer and U.S. diplomat with the Department of State.

Mathur was born in India and is an immigrant herself.

Mathur will provide an opportunity for questions.

The SHRM meeting will be held at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan's Charley's, from 11:30am to 2pm. The public invited to attend. SHRM members are urged to come out and gain some worthwhile tips regarding the I-9 form process.

Attendance is recommended for HR managers and anyone who is responsible for completing the Form I-9, as well as managers or business owners that have responsibility for business compliance.

The presentation includes the PIC lunch buffet at the cost of $20 for SHRM members and $30 for non-members. Seats are limited, so reserve your seat by contacting Penny Jones by e-mail at penelope.jones@hyatt.com or Denise Montenegro at denise.montenegro@hyatt.com or by telephone at 323-5867/68.

As the local chapter of the world's largest organization for human resource practitioners, the CNMI SHRM holds regular monthly and special meetings. The CNMI chapter has been active since 1996.

SHRM is the world's largest association devoted to human resource management. ***(SHRM)***

FBI beefs up its staff on Saipan

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Federal Bureau of Investigation has increased the number of its staff on Saipan and Guam, according to FBI spokesperson Michele Ernst yesterday.

In response to *Saipan Tribune*'s question about the reported increased FBI staff, Ernst said the FBI Honolulu division has made it a priority in recent years to secure resources for the Guam and Saipan offices.

At full staff, Ernst said, the FBI is better positioned to address crimes on the islands.

"As a result, the people of Guam and the CNMI should be seeing a positive impact in the months ahead," she said without disclosing the actual number of agents.

Ernst did not comment when asked if the move has anything to do with possible money laundering activity.

About a recent police and FBI search for the possible remains of missing sisters Faloma and Maleina Luhk at a Koblerville property, Ernst said the FBI is unable to comment.

Ernst directed the question about the Luhk sisters to the Department of Public Safety.

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS JUDICIARY

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB18-JUDICIARY-01

SUBMISSION DATE: March 15, 2018 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF TRANSPORT VEHICLE (12-15 Passenger Van) FOR THE CNMI JUDICIARY, DRUG COURT DIVISION"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE CASHIER WINDOW, DOOR #5, LOCATED AT THE GUMA HUSTISIA / IIMWAL AWEEWE / HOUSE OF JUSTICE, SUSUPE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ALEXANDRO C. CASTRO
JUDICIARY EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY

/S/ JOHN T. VILLAGOMEZ
JUDICIARY PROCUREMENT OFFICER

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950
Phone: (670) 237-6500 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

COMMITTEE MEETINGS NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, the Commonwealth Ports Authority hereby gives notice that Committee Meetings of the Board of Directors will be held on Thursday, March 8, 2018, at 9:30 a.m. in the Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) Classroom located in the Airport Fire Station at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport on the island of Saipan.

COMMITTEE AGENDAS

Airport Facilities and Financial Affairs Committee
1. Amelia Earhart
2. Concession Regulations
3. Incentive Program
4. IGS Lease
5. Max request
6. PFC Legislation
7. Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Claim
8. Skymark Airlines Update
9. Star Marianas Air Tinian relocation/Tinian Airport Arrival Terminal
10. Revenue Loss Projections
11. Rota Airport Canopy Replacement A/E Design Services
12. Security Cameras at the Rota Airport
13. Airport Facilities Committee Report
14. Financial Affairs Committee Report
15. Financial Report
16. Credit Card Machine Resolution
17. Loan Authorization Resolution

Seaport Facilities Committee
1. Ginen Saipan
2. Saipan Star
3. Saipan Globe – Analysis Narrative
4. Echo Dock
5. Committee Report

Personnel Affairs Committee
1. Committee Report
2. Draft Personnel Rules and Regulations – Received comments

Miscellaneous

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. A time limit will be imposed for oral testimony.

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-18-010

MAUI 1 & 4 SHAFT WELLS MECHANICAL LIFT REHABILITATION PROJECT, SAIPAN

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified firms to design a method to rehabilitate the Maui 1 & 4 mechanical lifts; to rehabilitate the existing mechanical lifts and develop a safety plan for all required work in the shaft and tunnels in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This project is funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from the above mentioned funding agencies.

The RFP Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 (non-refundable) for one RFP package set. The RFP package consisting of the specifications and plans for the project, will be provided in a CD or emailed to the registered email ID. Prospective Proposers must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division.

A Pre-proposal Conference will be conducted at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room 17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Dandan, Saipan on **February 22, 2018 at 10:00 AM (ChST).** Immediately after the conference, a Site Visit to the Maui Shaft Wells facility will be conducted. Proposers shall familiarize themselves with the site conditions prior to submitting the proposal.

One (1) original and four (4) hard copies, along with an electronic copy of the proposal on a compact disk in PDF format must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked *"CUC-RFP-18-010 Maui 1 & 4 Shaft Wells Mechanical Lift Rehabilitation Project, Saipan, CNMI"* to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **March 16, 2018 at 10:00 AM (ChST).** Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

A *Proposal Guarantee* of fifteen (15%) percent of the total proposal price must accompany the proposals. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or proposal bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A *Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful Proposer. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety.

Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Proposers are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Discussions may be conducted with responsible offerors who submit proposals determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. Offerors shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity to discussion and revision of proposals, and such revision may be permitted after submission and prior to award for the purpose of obtaining the best and final offers. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing offerors.

All Offeror are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Offeror due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the proposal under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Offeror are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All responses to this RFP should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the proponent awarded a contract. Successful proponents will be required to submit a copy of a valid CNMI Business license in compliance with the Contractor's Registration and Licensing Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, upon award of the contract. The Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less than the current CNMI minimum wage, prevailing through the period of contract, as indicated in the web page: https://marianaslabor.net/. The proponents shall be required to comply with all applicable CNMI and Federal Laws.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 26, 2018** to Manny B. Sablan, Jr. CUC Purchasing Officer via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to CUC Water-Wastewater Engineer, Jake Parker via email address jake.parker@cucgov.org and Marcela Tenorio, CUC Purchasing Assistant via email address Marcela.Tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Officer

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS
CUC-RSQ-18-014

DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT, SURVEYING, CONSTRUCTION INSPECTION, AND OTHER A&E PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FOR VARIOUS COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION WATER AND WASTEWATER PROJECTS

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting Statement of Qualifications from qualified architecture & engineering (A&E) firms for the design of water and wastewater infrastructure including but not limited to water mains, sewer mains (gravity and pressure), lift stations, booster pumping stations, water storage reservoirs, treatment works, upgrade to existing facilities; providing construction management services including but not limited to submittal review, clarification and technical assistance related to contract plans and specification, field engineering due to changes in conditions during construction, construction inspection, electrical inspection, review of partial payment requests, surveying, and other related engineering services on various CUC Water and Wastewater Projects on the Island of Saipan, Tinian and Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The proposed projects are funded by a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and CUC. All work is subject to EPA & CUC review and pre-approval.

The RSQ package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 for one RFSOQ package set. The RSQ package consisting of the specifications and scope-of-service will be provided in a CD or emailed to the registered email ID. Prospective firms must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division to be considered.

One (1) original and Five (5) copies of the SOQ must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked *"CUC-RSQ 18-014, Request for Statement of Qualifications"* to CUC Procurement & Supply Division, 3rd Floor, Room No.3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O.Box 501220, Dandan, Saipan MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on March 12, 2018.** Statements of Qualifications mailed via postal or courier service must be received or postmarked on or before due date and time. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

A&E firm are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the A&E firm due to lack of information or understanding of the Request for Statement of Qualifications requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a SOQ under the contract.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible A&E firms who submit proposals determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. A&E firms shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity to discussion and revision of proposals, and such revision may be permitted after submission and prior to award for the purpose of obtaining the best and final offers. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing offerors.

This Request for Statements of Qualifications does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of statements of qualifications in anticipation of a contract. This request and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC procurement regulations. The contractor shall be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable federal regulations.

All responses to this RSQ should take into account any and all taxes, which will become the obligation of the proponent, awarded a contract. Successful proponents will be required to submit a copy of a valid CNMI Business and Engineering license in compliance with the Licensing Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, upon award of the contract. The Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less than the current CNMI minimum wage, prevailing through the period of contract, as indicated in the web page: https://marianaslabor.net/. The proponents shall be required to comply with all applicable CNMI and Federal Laws.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 a.m. (ChST) on February 23, 2018** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Nicolette Villagomez, CUC Water/Wastewater Jr. Engineer via email address nicollette.villagomez@cucgov.org and Marcela Tenorio, CUC Purchasing Assistant via email address marecela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all Statement of Qualifications for any reason and to waive any defects in said RSQ, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All Statement of Qualifications shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Officer

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Will this be the moment America's gun culture changes?

Marjory Stoneman Douglas High students returned this week to a campus to be remembered forever as the site where 17 students and teachers died. But will that shooting spree also be memorialized as the catalyst for effective gun control action in Washington, Illinois and elsewhere? Is this the moment when vocal high school students inspire their generation to demand change—and refuse to back down or lose heart?

We hope so. That hope is tinted by reality: Previously, Americans' anger over such shootings burned hot but fizzled. Lawmakers play for time and eventually bury gun-control proposals.

This time could be different. Why so? Because as we write:

Illinois lawmakers have passed or are poised to pass a series of measures, many of which we support, to tighten gun laws. Those include a ban on bump stocks that turn semi-automatic rifles into machine gun-style weapons and a limit on high-capacity magazine clips.

President Donald Trump is jawboning Congress to send him "one terrific bill" on gun safety, including stronger background checks and restrictions based on age and mental health.

Walmart, the nation's largest retailer, and Dick's Sporting Goods no longer will sell guns to people under 21. Both also are imposing new restrictions on ammunition sales. Company execs didn't need a new law. They needed this: "When we saw what the kids were going through and the grief of the parents and the kids who were killed in Parkland, we felt we needed to do something," Dick's Chairman and CEO Ed Stack told ABC News. Who's next?

Several major corporations, including MetLife, Hertz and Delta Air Lines, have cut ties with the National Rifle Association.

Students plan demonstrations and marches in Washington and across the nation.

Today, arguably more than ever, Americans understand that gun violence is a public health epidemic killing innocent people, just the way a virus does.

This threat demands an urgent national response. Congress, start by assembling public health experts into a Manhattan Project-style effort to pinpoint the best ways to curtail this epidemic. Why isn't there more research into possible solutions? One reason, The Atlantic reports, is a 1996 Congressional amendment that barred the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention from using money to "advocate or promote gun control." The amendment, sponsored by the late GOP Rep. Jay Dickey of Arkansas, has exerted a chilling effect for decades.

Six years ago, Dickey, by then retired from Congress, co-authored a Washington Post op-ed that revealed a change of heart. The U.S. government was spending $240 million a year on traffic safety research but almost nothing on firearms safety research, the authors wrote: "Most politicians fear talking about guns almost as much as they would being

See AMERICA'S on Next Page

Is anyone paying attention to China?

By FAREED ZAKARIA
The Washington Post

Fareed Zakaria writes a foreign affairs column for The Post. *He is also the host of CNN's Fareed Zakaria GPS and a contributing editor for* The Atlantic. *Follow @FareedZakaria*

Amid the flurry of news about Hope Hicks and Jared Kushner and this week's Trump reality show on guns, it would be easy to miss what's happening in China. But it is huge and consequential. China is making the most significant change to its political system in 35 years. What impact will this have on China and the world? That's the question that every policymaker, business executive and investor should be asking.

Deng Xiaoping is generally remembered as the man who began China's economic reforms. But perhaps more important were his political reforms. He took a system that had been utterly dominated by one man, Mao Zedong, and institutionalized it. Perhaps the single most significant transformation was in 1982, when the Chinese Communist Party wrote into the country's constitution that its president and vice president could serve no more than two consecutive terms. This made China unique: a dictatorship with term limits. In most authoritarian regimes, the ruler accumulates power and over the years becomes more arrogant, corrupt and unaccountable. This wasn't possible in the Chinese system, which limited any individual's power and focused instead on the collective, the party.

China's unique model also produced an economic miracle. The country has had three decades of merit-based selection and promotion within the Communist Party, wise long-range planning and smart pro-growth economic policies. Since 1978, China's gross domestic product has grown at an astounding average annual rate of almost 10 percent, which the World Bank calls "the fastest sustained expansion by a major economy in history."

For decades, China seemed to be getting more institutionalized. Deng had ruled as a supreme leader, wielding power more from behind the scenes than from any offices he held. His successor, Jiang Zemin, held all the key posts when he was in power. After his two terms as president, he continued to lead the Central Military Commission for two more years and even after that remained influential informally. When Jiang's successor, Hu Jintao, finished his two terms as president, he simultaneously relinquished the top military position and lost nearly all power at once. But that trend has now been turned on its head. If term limits are abolished, which is now almost certain, Xi Jinping could stay China's president, general secretary of the Communist Party and chairman of the Central Military Commission for the rest of his life. And he is just 64.

Xi has been a strong leader for China. He has tackled two of the nation's most pressing problems, the corruption within the Communist Party and the pollution caused by China's fast growth. These efforts have been very popular within the country at large. He has not, however, tackled other crucial challenges for China: long-stalled economic reforms and reduction of its rising debt levels. Xi's supporters argue that his consolidation of power will now allow him to take these difficult steps and begin the next stage of reforms.

The real challenge for China, however, is not about Xi's economic policies. He has been reluctant to pursue tough, unpopular measures, but so are most governments everywhere, democratic or dictatorial. (Has the United States done anything about its rapidly rising debt?) The real danger is that China is eliminating perhaps the central restraint in a system that provides staggering amounts of power to the country's leaders. What will that do, over time, to the ambitions and appetites of leaders? "Power tends to corrupt," Lord Acton famously wrote in 1887, "and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Perhaps China will avoid this tendency, but it has been widespread throughout history.

China under Xi has also become more ambitious internationally. It is now the world's second-largest economy, the third-largest funder of the United Nations and the supplier of more peacekeepers than the other four permanent Security Council members combined. The country has been bulking up its military while devoting significant resources to far-flung cultural arms such as the Confucius Institute. It has announced loans and investment spending — the Belt and Road Initiative — that will be about 10 times the size of the Marshall Plan, by some estimates. It is determined to lead the world in fields such as solar and wind power, electric cars and artificial intelligence.

Chinese scholars say China is entering a new era with a new system. After the Communist Party took power in 1949, it had roughly 30 years of Mao's rule. That was followed by roughly 30 years of Deng and his system. It is now clear that we are in the third era, which might be 30 years of Xi. Is anybody in Washington paying attention?

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

An immigration policy unbecoming of America

By REX HUPPKE
Chicago Tribune

Rex Huppke is a columnist for the Chicago Tribune*. Readers may email him at rhuppke@chicagotribune.com.*

CHICAGO—There's a little girl being held in a room in Chicago, and she shouldn't be here. She should be with her mother in California, not scared and surrounded by strangers in a strange city.

I don't know the little girl's name, but I know she's enduring a psychological hell no child should face. And I know who's responsible for bringing her here, for taking her from her mother and transporting her across an unfamiliar country for reasons that don't stand the test of decency.

It's the United States government. Our government. That's who is responsible for the frightened child tucked away somewhere in this city.

A lawsuit filed this week by the American Civil Liberties Union identifies the girl only as "S.S." She has been here for months. She spent her 7th birthday at a Chicago facility run by the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement, a facility intended for immigrant children who entered the country without a parent.

But S.S. has a parent. The lawsuit calls her "Ms. L." She's 39 and is being held at the Otay Mesa Detention Center in San Diego, which is run by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

According to the ACLU lawsuit, Ms. L fled Congo, formerly Zaire, fearing "near certain death" and arrived at a U.S. port of entry near San Diego on Nov. 1. She and her daughter did not try to sneak in. They went directly to border agents, and the mother communicated that she was seeking asylum, which can be granted to people who have suffered persecution or fear persecution due to race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group.

Per the lawsuit: "Based on her expression of a fear of returning to Congo, Ms. L. was given an initial screening interview before an asylum officer. The initial interview requires the asylum officer to determine whether the applicant has a significant possibility of ultimately receiving asylum. The officer determined that Ms. L. did have a significant possibility of ultimately receiving asylum and therefore allowed her to move on to the next stage of the long asylum process."

Ms. L followed the proper procedures for an asylum seeker.

Lee Gelernt, deputy director of the ACLU's Immigrants' Rights Project and one of the attorneys representing Ms. L and her daughter, said in an interview: "She has a genuine fear, she's not a criminal, she's not a terrorist, she presented herself at the border and said she needs help."

Four days after their arrival, Gelernt said, immigration officers in San Diego took the daughter into another room. Once the little girl was gone, Ms. L was handcuffed.

"Then she hears the daughter screaming frantically," Gelernt said. "The daughter is taken away, and the mother doesn't speak to the daughter for four days. In those four days, she has no idea what has happened to her daughter."

Since then, mother and child have been allowed to speak to each other only six times by phone, never with video. Six times. In nearly four months.

"Chicago might as well be the moon for this family from a little village in the Congo," Gelernt said. "They have no idea why they're separated, where each other are."

From the lawsuit: "S.S. is scared and misses her mother, and wants to be reunited with her as soon as possible. Each time S.S. is able to speak with her mother on the phone, she is crying."

She thinks her mother is in prison. She's a 7-year-old child whose native tongue is Lingala and she has spent four months in a facility in Chicago for no good reason.

Except, apparently, to send a message. That's what this is really about, after all.

Immigration hardliners in our government think one way to deter immigrants and asylum seekers from coming here is to separate children from their parents when they arrive.

In March 2017, when White House Chief of Staff John Kelly was the Secretary of Homeland Security, he said DHS was considering separating families caught crossing the border with Mexico into the United States.

He described it as a way to deter parents from bringing their children through what he called the "very, very dangerous network that brings them up from Mexico." The idea was met with considerable outrage, and it never became official policy.

But it's happening, and the 7-year-old Congolese girl in Chicago—who didn't come through a dangerous Mexican network and whose mother did nothing to disguise her intention to seek asylum—is just one example. Gelernt said there are reports of hundreds more.

The ACLU's lawsuit says the government's action is unconstitutional: "The Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment does not permit the government to forcibly take a 7-year-old child from her mother, without justification or even a hearing."

Simply put, this child has become a pawn in a sickeningly mean-spirited governmental experiment, one that stands in stark contrast to what America represents.

Or at least what America used to represent. I honestly don't know anymore.

I don't know what kind of country handcuffs a mother who fears for her life and hauls her young daughter more than 2,000 miles away.

I don't know what kind of country ignores statements like this from the American Academy of Pediatrics: "Federal authorities must exercise caution to ensure that the emotional and physical stress children experience as they seek refuge in the United States is not exacerbated by the additional trauma of being separated" from their families. "Proposals to separate children from their families as a tool of law enforcement to deter immigration are harsh and counterproductive."

I contacted Homeland Security and asked them for comment on this situation.

Press Secretary Tyler Houlton responded via email: "As a matter of policy, we do not comment on pending litigation. Thanks."

I emailed back and asked a more general question: "Is it DHS policy to separate the children of asylum seekers from a parent when the parent is not being prosecuted for anything?"

No response.

I emailed again and asked an even more general question: "Can you or someone at DHS speak to me about the overall policy for handling asylum seekers who have children?"

Again, no response.

There's a little girl in Chicago who shouldn't be here. She should be in the arms of her mother.

Government officials can refuse to answer my questions. They can delude themselves into believing this arrangement is just. But most Americans will see the treatment of this family for what it is: Cruelty unbecoming of our nation.

We can find echoes of the Fugitive Slave Act in today's deportation fight

By HAROLD MEYERSON
Los Angeles Times

Harold Meyerson is executive editor of the American Prospect*. He is a contributing writer to* Opinion*.*

Last week, Libby Schaaf, mayor of Oakland, took the logic of so-called sanctuary cities and states one step further by warning that Immigration and Customs Enforcement had planned a raid on immigrants in the country illegally. Over the weekend, roughly 150 immigrants were apprehended in Northern California.

Predictably, the backlash from Trump supporters, immigrant haters and ICE authorities has been intense. Was Schaaf impeding law enforcement? What was she thinking?

It was probably a good deal like what the leaders of pre-Civil War Northern cities and states were thinking when they resisted the federal government's efforts to enforce the Fugitive Slave Act, which a Southern-dominated Congress had enacted in 1850.

In case you don't remember your U.S. history: An 1842 court ruling absolved states of any duty to cooperate in the recapture of former slaves who'd freed themselves by fleeing to the North. In response, as part of the Compromise of 1850, the Congress passed and President Millard Fillmore signed the Fugitive Slave Act, which not only required state and local governmental officials to aid owners and their agents who'd come North to capture and re-enslave the runaways, but also required the same level of cooperation from all citizens. If a slaver was in the act of recapture, bystanders were required to help out.

Not surprisingly, the North greeted the new law with fury and resistance. Vermont, Maine, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Michigan and Wisconsin all enacted "personal liberty laws"—the 1850s equivalent of California's sanctuary state law—forbidding public officials from cooperating with the slave owners or the federal forces sent to back them up, denying the use of their jails to house the captives, and requiring jury trials to decide if the owners could make off with their abductees. The Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled that the Fugitive Slave Act violated the Constitution's 10th Amendment, which gave states the power to enact laws not specifically preempted by federal authority. (The Southern-dominated U.S. Supreme Court overturned that ruling on the eve of the Civil War.)

Opponents of the Fugitive Slave Act also took to the streets (and jury rooms, where verdicts were rendered that freed some of the captives). Crowds would form to oppose and resist, sometimes forcibly, the apprehensions of African Americans.

According to H. Robert Baker, a historian at Georgia State University, "Whole sections of Milwaukee, Chicago, New York City and Boston became no-go zones for slave catchers." Confronted with this level of resistance, Fillmore sent in federal troops to assist and protect the slave catchers.

History doesn't repeat itself, but in our dispute over immigrants in the country illegally and our predecessors' dispute over fugitive slaves, it takes no leap of logic or imagination to find the rhymes.

Now, as then, one part of the country (President Trump's disproportionately rural, white nationalist base) has enlisted federal power to enforce a legal regime in a different part of the country (racially diverse, immigrant-heavy cities) that views the law as morally repulsive and destructive of the social fabric.

Just as the slave catchers argued, speciously, that freed Negroes imperiled the antebellum North, today's anti-immigrant forces, beginning with Trump, argue that immigrants pose a threat to public safety, though crime has fallen precipitously during the past quarter-century.

The only "crime" that most undocumented immigrants have committed—and the only one that places them in federal legal jeopardy—is that of being undocumented. Likewise, the only "crime" that most escaped slaves had committed—and the only one that placed them in federal legal jeopardy—was escaping.

And in yet another rhyme, cities and states are fighting back. Police are enjoined from cooperating with ICE. Citizens groups have formed rapid response teams to support apprehended immigrants and, when they have reason to believe raids are imminent, send out a warning—as Schaaf did last week. But there's still more that our citizen bystanders can do, including peaceful, obstructive civil disobedient sit-ins at ICE offices.

The right kind of confrontation may even give some ICE agents second thoughts about their mission. After all, if the Trump roundup persists, they're likely to join the troops who enforced the Fugitive Slave Act in history's moral dustbin.

AMERICA'S

From Page 10

confronted by one, but these fears are senseless. We must learn what we can do to save lives. It is like the answer to the question 'When is the best time to plant a tree?' The best time to start was 20 years ago; the second-best time is now."

That "now" was in 2012. Nothing happened. How about this now?

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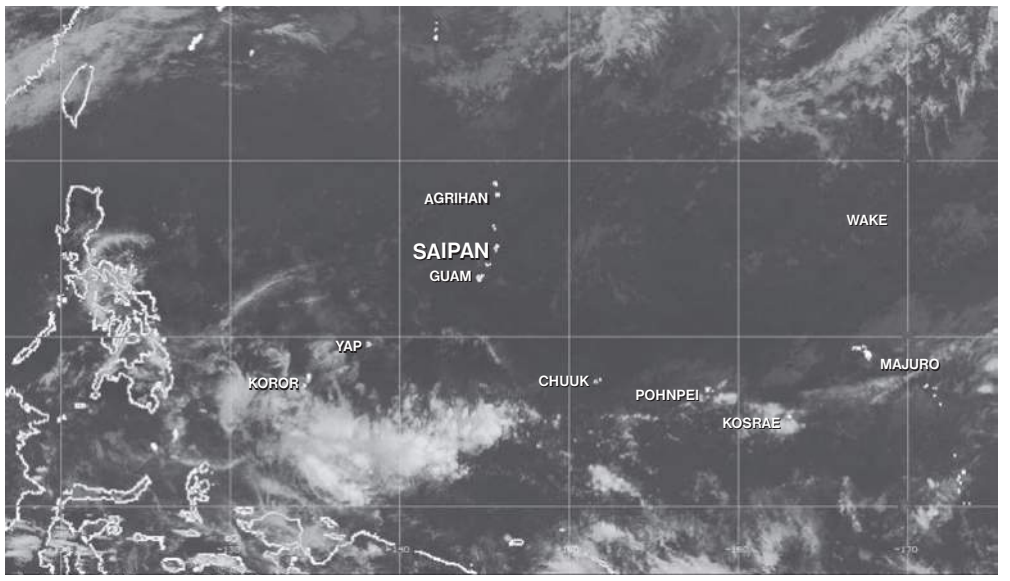
The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. northeast winds 15 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy. A slight chance of showers.
▲89° ▼77°	▲89° ▼77°	▲89° ▼77°	▲89° ▼77°	▲89° ▼77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:15 AM, SUNDAY, MARCH 4, 2018
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

After this one line of showers passes weather will improve for the rest of the day. Winds have picked up and we will have to consider the implications of that, especially for fire weather. This is largely covered in the marine forecast as we have seas rising about a foot. After this uptick in winds passes by, we get a slight uptick in showers, then back to the heart of dry season for us. Extrapolating the cloud feature on satellite suggests it will arrive late in the morning Monday. Inherited grids had slight chance turning to isolated then turning back to slight chance. This seemed fine, so just refreshed winds and waves, which were a little lower in the late forecast periods.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Showers	85° / 75°
Palau	Thunderstorm	86° / 78°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	85° / 78°
Chuuk	Showers	85° / 79°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorm	83° / 77°
Kosrae	Thunderstorm	84° / 77°
Majuro	Thunderstorm	84° / 80°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	77° / 64°
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	45° / 25°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	73° / 64°
Honolulu	Windy	78° / 69°
London	Snow	34° / 30°
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	70° / 48°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	95° / 79°
Melbourne	Sunny	75° / 55°
Miami	Mostly Sunny	74° / 64°
New York	Mostly Sunny	47° / 34°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	54° / 39°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	48° / 37°
Busan	Partly Cloudy	48° / 39°
Rome	Rain	55° / 48°
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	67° / 50°
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	58° / 43°
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	50° / 28°
Tokyo	Showers	54° / 37°
Washington, DC	Sunny	50° / 34°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
4:02 AM	LOW TIDE	0.19
10:04 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.97
4:35 PM	LOW TIDE	0.39
10:19 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.81

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:31 AM	6:25 PM
Tuesday	6:31 AM	6:25 PM
Wednesday	6:30 AM	6:25 PM
Thursday	6:29 AM	6:25 PM
Friday	6:29 AM	6:26 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	8:49 am	9:26 pm
Tuesday	-	9:32 am	10:18 pm
Wednesday	-	10:14 am	11:09 pm
Thursday	-	10:58 am	-
Friday	12:00 am	11:42 pm	-

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 19, 2017

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA6394	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA6392	8:40am	9:30am	Daily
UA6391	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota
UA6390	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6
UA6398	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily
UA6396	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA6391	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA6391	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL297	4:20pm	7:15pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:10am	6:10am	1, 7
7C3451	4:00am	7:05am	4, 5

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

TW308	2:00am	6:05am	Daily
OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
LJ652	3:40am	7:30am	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3403	4:45am	8:30am	Daily
7C3401	4:00pm	7:45pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	5:40am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)

JD396	7:30am	12:00pm	1
JD396	4:50pm	10:00pm	4

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/701	2:10am	10:55am	1 via ICN
OZ626/701	2:50am	10:55am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA6394/191	4:15am	9:00am	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	8:10am	7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	9:20am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via GUM
UA6398/183	6:05pm	9:40pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA6398/183	6:05pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6398/193	6:05pm	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7
UA6398/159	6:05pm	11:00pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA6393	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA6395	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA6391	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA6390	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA6397	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA6399	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA6390	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA6390	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:00pm	2:10am+1	4
7C3452	9:05pm	2:10am+1	3, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	9:30am	3:00pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
TW307	7:45pm	1:00am+1	Daily
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
LJ651	9:10pm	2:40am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:20pm	4:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN

JD395	8:25am	3:30pm	4
JD395	9:55pm	5:00am+1	7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:25pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA182/6395	12:40am	8:05am	3, 6 via GUM
UA190/6397	9:55am	5:35pm	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ702/625	12:25pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/625	12:25pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/UA6395	10:05pm	8:05am+1	Daily via GUM
UA192/6395	10:30pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via ROR-GUM
UA184/6395	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:15pm	12:15am+1	3, 7
UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6
UA116/6395	11:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, LJ Jin Air, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The* Saipan Tribune *is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Participate and Learn Program

Photos by BEA CABRERA

Seisa High School students dress up in traditional *kimomo* to welcome guests, teachers, and students at the 2018 "Participate and Learn Program" Thanksgiving dinner of Marianas High School, Francisco M. Sablan Middle School, and Seisa High School in Japan at the Saipan World Resort in San Jose last Friday.

Program director Kuniko Sasaki and Seisa High School principal Hajime Kaneko pose for a picture at the 2018 "Participate and Learn Program" Thanksgiving dinner of Marianas High School, Francisco M. Sablan Middle School, and Seisa High School in Japan at the Saipan World Resort in San Jose last Friday.

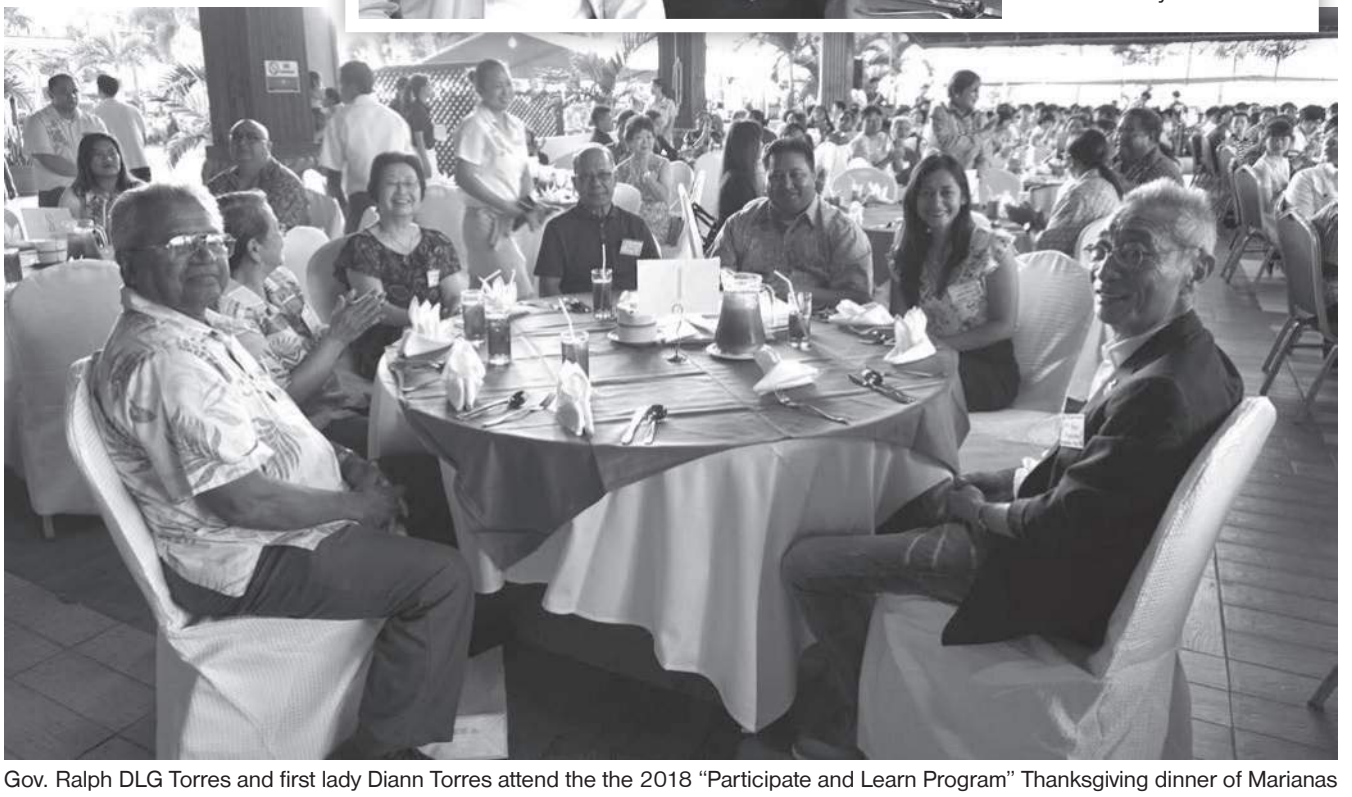
"This trip is not just a sightseeing tour but about learning history, culture and building lasting relationships," said Seisa Group, Inc. CEO, founder, and chair Yasuo Z. Miyazawa at the 2018 "Participate and Learn Program" Thanksgiving dinner of Marianas High School, Francisco M. Sablan Middle School, and Seisa High School in Japan at the Saipan World Resort in San Jose last Friday.

CNMI and Seisa High School students mingle at the 2018 "Participate and Learn Program" Thanksgiving dinner at the Saipan World Resort in San Jose last Friday.

From left, Seisa Group Inc. COO, president Hajime Inoue, Marianas High School principal Cherlyn Cabrera, and Seisa High School principal Haime Kaneko at the 2018 "Participate and Learn Program" Thanksgiving dinner of Marianas High School, Francisco M. Sablan Middle School, and Seisa High School in Japan at the Saipan World Resort in San Jose last Friday.

Seisa COO Hajime Inoue speaks at the 2018 "Participate and Learn Program" Thanksgiving dinner of Marianas High School, Francisco M. Sablan Middle School, and Seisa High School in Japan at the Saipan World Resort in San Jose last Friday. Inoue states that he is a product of the program when he was still a student at Seisa High School.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres said the CNMI holds dear its ties with Japan during his speech at the 2018 Participate and Learn Program Thanksgiving Dinner of Marianas High School, Francisco M. Sablan Middle School, and Seisa High School in Japan at the Saipan World Resort in San Jose last Friday.



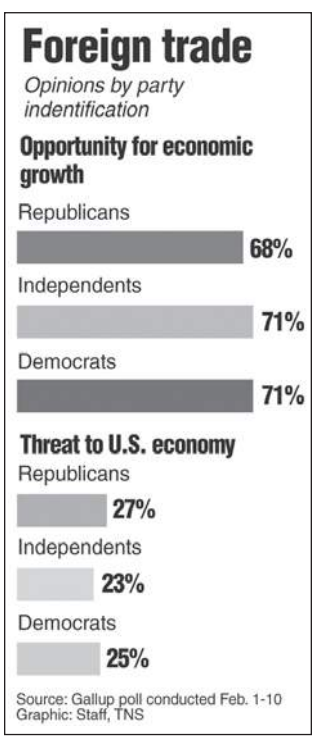
Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and first lady Diann Torres attend the the 2018 "Participate and Learn Program" Thanksgiving dinner of Marianas High School, Francisco M. Sablan Middle School, and Seisa High School in Japan at the Saipan World Resort in San Jose last Friday.

Yasuo Miyazawa receives a gift of a painting from Julia Malate of Marianas High School at the 2018 "Participate and Learn Program" Thanksgiving dinner of MHS, Francisco M. Sablan Middle School, and Seisa High School in Japan at the Saipan World Resort in San Jose last Friday.

Business

Tariffs would aid steelworkers at expense of far more others

A train brings steaming coke to the Krupp Mannesmann steel factory in Duisburg, Germany, Friday, March 2, 2018. AP



WASHINGTON (AP)—President Donald Trump's move to impose tariffs on imported steel is meant to protect an industry that employs about 140,000 Americans. Yet by raising the price of steel, those same tariffs stand to hurt a far larger group of U.S. workers: the 6.5 million who work in industries that buy steel—from automakers to aircraft manufacturers to suppliers of building materials.

Trump has vowed to impose 25 percent tariffs next week on imported steel and 10 percent on aluminum, which he says pose a threat to America's national security. By building barriers to imported metal, the tariffs would allow U.S. steel companies to expand production and charge higher prices than they could without broader competition. Those higher prices, in turn, would squeeze the companies that use the materials and potentially the consumers who buy the finished goods.

■■■

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Billionaire investor Carl Icahn sold nearly 1 million shares of stock in a company tied to the steel industry leading up to President Donald Trump's decision to impose costly tariffs on steel and aluminum imported into the U.S.

Icahn also has ties to Trump; he was an unpaid adviser to the president before resigning last August.

A recent regulatory filing disclosed Icahn sold $31.3 million worth of stock in crane manufacturer Manitowoc Co. last month. Manitowoc could be hurt by Trump's tariffs, a threat that caused the company's shares to drop by 9 percent to $26.93 since the president's announcement.

Icahn sold his Manitowoc stock at prices ranging from $32.47 to $34.31 from Feb. 12 to Feb. 22.

Icahn's office didn't immediately respond to a request for comment on Saturday.

■■■

Some economists warn that if consumers must pay more for cars or businesses more for heavy equipment, the resulting slowdown in spending could hamper the economy.

"Higher prices for consumers could eventually lead to slower U.S. economic growth and result in reduced (overall) factory employment," Moody's Investors Service cautioned in a report.

The tariffs and the prospect they will ignite a conflict with America's trading partners has rattled Wall Street: The Dow Jones industrial average plunged 420 points on Thursday and an additional 71 points Friday.

Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross went on CNBC to dismiss as overblown any fears that steel-consuming companies stand to suffer in any meaningful way.

"It's trivial," Ross said.

The Commerce secretary argued that the tariffs would add only about $175 to the cost of a $35,000 car - one half of 1 percent.

Ross also held up a Campbell's Soup can to illustrate what he called the negligible effect that steel tariffs would have.

"In the can of Campbell's Soup," Ross said, "there's about 2.6 pennies' worth of steel. So if that goes up by 25 percent, that's about six-tenths of 1 cent on the price of a can of Campbell's Soup.... Who in the world is going to be too bothered by six-tenths of a cent?"

Trump has built a deep connection to the steel industry, rooted in promises he made on the campaign trail in 2016. At rally after rally, Trump blamed past trade deals and Chinese dumping for closing U.S. steel plants. He vowed to revive the industry and to "put American-produced steel back into the backbone of the country."

"We are going to put the miners and the factory workers and the steel workers back to work," he told a rally in Scranton, Pennsylvania, the day before the election.

On Friday, the president tweeted: "Our steel industry is in bad shape. IF YOU DON'T HAVE STEEL, YOU DON'T HAVE A COUNTRY!"

As it happens, America's steel industry has received government protection from foreign competition for decades. Washington has muscled other countries into agreeing to limit how much of their steel could enter the United States or has accused them of dumping steel at unfairly low prices.

Vatican indicts ex-bank head, says embezzlement loss is $62M

VATICAN CITY (AP)—Vatican prosecutors have indicted the former president of the Vatican bank and his lawyer on embezzlement charges, holding them responsible for losses of more than 50 million euros ($62 million) from real estate sales.

The trial of Angelo Caloia and his lawyer, Gabriele Liuzzo, begins March 15. A third suspect died while under investigation.

The Institute for Religious Works said late Friday that Caloia and his lawyer were charged with alleged embezzlement and self-laundering between 2001 and 2008, when the bank disposed of "a considerable part of its real estate assets."

The scam allegedly involved the suspects selling Vatican-owned real estate at under value prices to offshore companies that then resold the buildings at market rates, with the suspects allegedly profiting from the difference, according to a person familiar with the investigation.

The IOR, as the bank is known, is joining a civil case alongside the criminal trial to try to recover some of the losses.

The Vatican announced the criminal investigation into Caloia, the IOR president from 1989-2009, attorney Liuzzo and the late bank director general, Lelio Scaletti, in 2014 after bank officials discovered irregularities in IOR accounts and operations.

The suspects have denied wrongdoing.

It's the latest attempt by the IOR to try to recover money it claims it lost due to the crimes or bungled decisions of its former managers.

Just last month, the Vatican's civil tribunal found two other former bank heads, Paolo Cipriani and Massimo Tulli, liable for mismanagement for bad investments during their tenure and ordered them to repay the institution. The two resigned from the bank in 2013.

The IOR launched a massive internal overhaul and reform of its operations as part of a process launched by Pope Benedict XVI to clean up its reputation as a scandal-plagued off-shore tax haven.

World bracing for risk of Trump's trade war

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Donald Trump's plan to slap taxes on steel and aluminum imports was branded Friday as "absolutely unacceptable" by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada, the United States' biggest foreign source of both metals.

Trump hasn't sparked a trade war—yet. But his provocative action has raised the risk of an all-out conflict that could pit the United States against its friends and the entire global financial system that it helped create after World War II. When Trump announced Thursday he was imposing a 25 percent tariff on steel and 10 percent tariff on aluminum on national security grounds, he set into motion the possibility that trading partners would fight back with tariffs of their own.

The rebukes delivered on Friday suggested that some countries were prepared to retaliate if necessary.

Trudeau stressed in his comments he was prepared to "defend Canadian industry" and that the tariffs would also hurt U.S. consumers and businesses because prices could rise.

The 28 countries in the European Union could respond by taxing goods that are core to the American identity such as Bourbon whiskey, blue jeans and Harley Davidson motorcycles, said Jean-Claude Juncker, president of the European Commission.

"I don't like using the word trade war, but I can't see how this isn't part of warlike behavior," Juncker told German media.

Roberto Azevedo, the director-general of the World Trade Organization, warned that a "trade war is in no one's interests."

China—the world's largest steel producer and Trump's primary target—stayed quiet about how it would respond.

Trump's fellow Republicans urged caution. Doug Andres, an aide for House Speaker Paul Ryan, said that Ryan "is hoping the president will consider the unintended consequences of this idea."

But the U.S. president appears to be in battle mode.

He views the tariffs as a way to pressure trading partners into submission and wipe away the long-standing trade deficit.

"Trade wars are good, and easy to win," he said on Twitter.

Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross downplayed the risk of rising prices from the steel and aluminum tariffs. He held up cans of Campbell's soup and Coca-Cola during a CNBC interview, noting that each would go up by less than a penny under the new taxes.

Even if Trump is itching for a trade war, it's not clear if one will materialize.

"It's too soon to tell for a whole host of reasons," said Scott Lincicome, a trade lawyer and adjunct scholar at the libertarian Cato Institute.

Because there are no formal declarations, Lincicome said the "imaginary threshold" for this kind of showdown would involve countries imposing a broad set of tariffs that choked off trade, rather than taxes on the two basic categories of steel and aluminum being proposed by Trump.

The battle would extend beyond the exchange of goods to include services and investments among nations.

For the time being, so much depends on a set of unknowns, such that the only sure thing is that the risks of a breakdown in trade have increased.

Nation

Police investigate why student gunned down his parents

Investigators were trying to figure out why a Central Michigan University student charged with fatally shooting his parents acted so strangely the day before the killings that he was taken to a hospital.

The shooting happened Friday after James Eric Davis Jr.'s parents picked him up from that hospital and brought him to his dorm to pack up for spring break. University police Chief Bill Yeagley said the 19-year-old can be seen on video in the dorm's parking lot with the gun before he entered the residence hall where his parents were shot around 8:30 a.m.

Davis Jr. has been charged with two counts of murder and a weapons charge in the shootings of his father, Eric Davis Sr., and mother, Diva Davis, university spokeswoman Heather Smith said. Davis Sr. was a part-time police officer in Bellwood, Illinois, and Yeagley said the gun used by Davis Jr. belonged to his father.

At a press conference Saturday, Yeagley declined to say whether drugs were found in Davis Jr.'s system. He declined to say what type of gun was used or whether it was his father's service revolver.

Davis Jr. was initially taken to a hospital after his arrest early Saturday but will be moved to a jail once he's discharged. It was not immediately clear when he will make his first court appearance.

AP

Police search for 19-year-old suspect James Eric Davis Jr. in local neighborhoods after a fatal shooting at Central Michigan University's Campbell Hall, on Friday, March 2, 2018, in Mount Pleasant, Mich. Davis is a sophomore at the school.

Authorities said Davis Jr. fled after the shootings, prompting an intensive manhunt in the area. He was arrested without incident shortly after midnight when someone aboard a train spotted a person along railroad tracks in Mount Pleasant, and called police, Yeagley said.

Central Michigan is at Mount Pleasant, about a 285-mile (460-kilometer) drive from the family's hometown of Plainfield, Illinois, in south suburban Chicago. The shooting occurred on a day when parents were arriving to pick up students at the university for the beginning of a weeklong spring break.

Yeagley said witness statements and video indicate that at the time they were shot, Davis Jr.'s parents were in his fourth-floor dorm at the campus' Campbell Hall "simply packing up for spring break."

Davis Sr. had been a longtime member of the Illinois Army National Guard, serving in the Iraq War and later as a recruiter, according to Illinois National Guard spokesman Lt. Col. Brad Leighton.

An officer was so concerned about Davis Jr.'s erratic behavior that he had spoken to his mother about possible drug use before the parents arrived on campus.

"The mother said she too was concerned this could be drugs," he said.

Yeagley said Davis Jr. had not been previously identified by campus officials as someone that others on campus were concerned about.

"Mr. Davis was not ever reported, and we had no interaction that we're aware of with him in any negative fashion—with anybody—prior to this incident," he said.

University President George E. Ross said the shooting had left the campus and surrounding community traumatized. "There were thousands of people who were sheltering in place yesterday and they will be dealing with this for the rest of their lives," he said. ***(AP)***

Power outages, flooding linger following powerful nor'easter

BOSTON (AP)—Tens of thousands of utility workers in the Northeast raced to restore power to more than 1.5 million homes and businesses just days after a powerful nor'easter caused flooding and wind damage from Virginia to Maine.

As conditions slowly improved on Saturday, the cleanup of snapped trees, damaged structures and mountains of debris began. Flood waters had receded in most areas, but Friday's storm had taken huge chunks out of the coastline in Massachusetts and other states. Meanwhile, forecasters were watching another potential weather system that could bring rain, or even more snow, to the region later in the week.

"We've been here a long time and we've never seen it as bad as this," said Alex Barmashi, who lives in the hard-hit village of Sagamore Beach in Massachusetts.

Up the coast in Scituate, Becky Smith watched as ocean waters started to fill up a nearby marina's parking lot from her vantage point at the Barker Tavern, a restaurant overlooking the harbor.

"It looks like a war zone," she said Saturday, describing the scene in the coastal town near Boston where powerful waves dumped sand and rubble on roads and winds uprooted massive trees. "It's a lot of debris, big rocks and pieces of wood littering the streets."

Residents in other areas, meanwhile, bailed out basements and surveyed the damage while waiting for power to be restored, a process that power companies warned could take days in some areas. Power outages on the East Coast dipped by about 500,000 from a peak of 2 million earlier Saturday, but officials said lingering wind gusts were slowing repair efforts.

The storm's aftermath also was still affecting travel, with airports from Washington, D.C. to Boston reporting dozens of delays and cancellations, while service was slowly returning to normal on rail systems throughout the region. Amtrak said nearly all of its northeast corridor trains should return to service on Sunday.

The death toll from the storm increased by four, with authorities saying at least nine people had lost their lives.

A 41-year-old New Jersey man was killed Friday night when he came in contact with live power lines, NJ.com reported. A 25-year-old man in Connecticut, a 57-year-old Pennsylvania man and a 37-year-old Massachusetts man were killed when trees fell on their vehicles Friday. The other five people killed included two children. A man and a 6-year-old boy were killed in different parts of Virginia, while an 11-year-old boy in New York state and a man in Rhode Island, both died. A 77-year-old woman died after being struck by a branch outside her home near Baltimore.

Forecasters said the storm had mostly headed out to sea by Saturday afternoon, but noted its impact likely would still be felt on Sunday.

Bike helmets, ski goggles swept up in gun control debate

SEATTLE (AP)—Public pressure against companies connected to the gun industry following last month's school shooting in Florida has hit an unlikely target: REI, the outdoors co-op better known for its public lands advocacy, liberal return policy and annual dividend for customers.

The Seattle-based retailer, which doesn't sell guns, announced late Thursday that it will at least temporarily stop ordering ski goggles, water bottles, bike helmets and other products from some popular brands—including CamelBak, Giro and Bolle—because their parent company, Vista Outdoor, also makes ammunition and assault-style rifles. The decision came a few hours after REI's Canadian counterpart, Mountain Equipment Co-op, took a similar step.

"We believe that it is the job of companies that manufacture and sell guns and ammunition to work towards common sense solutions that prevent the type of violence that happened in Florida last month," REI said. "This morning we learned that Vista does not plan to make a public statement that outlines a clear plan of action. As a result, we have decided to place a hold on future orders of products that Vista sells through REI while we assess how Vista proceeds."

An outpouring of customer concern over continued mass shootings has prompted MetLife, Hertz, Delta Air Lines and other major U.S. corporations to cut ties with the National Rifle Association, at some political risk. Kroger, L.L. Bean, Dick's Sporting Goods and Walmart have announced that they'll no longer sell guns to anyone under 21.

Smaller companies have acted too, including bike shops around the country that have announced they'll no longer carry Vista products.

Vista, based in Farmington, Utah, did not return an email seeking comment. It owns ammunition and firearms manufacturers, including Savage Arms, and it acquired outdoor-equipment companies over the last few years to complement its shooting-sports division, buying CamelBak in 2015 for $412.5 million.

The political battle is the latest to sweep up outdoor retailers like REI, which has long embraced a philosophy of social corporate responsibility but which also has more than 6 million members encompassing a range of political views.

"They're a progressive company," said Christine Rosen, a professor at the University of California Berkeley's Haas School of Business. "This is continent with its philosophy as a corporation. It's a company that puts people in the wilderness to enjoy the wilderness, not to finish off the wildlife."

Patagonia and REI both criticized the Trump administration for its decision to drastically shrink two national monuments in Utah. Patagonia has sued to block the decision - "The President Stole Your Land," it declared on its website in December - and in January, the multimillion-dollar Outdoor Retailer and Snow Show moved from Utah to Colorado to protest Utah officials' support for the action.

Asia

Slain Filipina in freezer shows risks to overseas workers

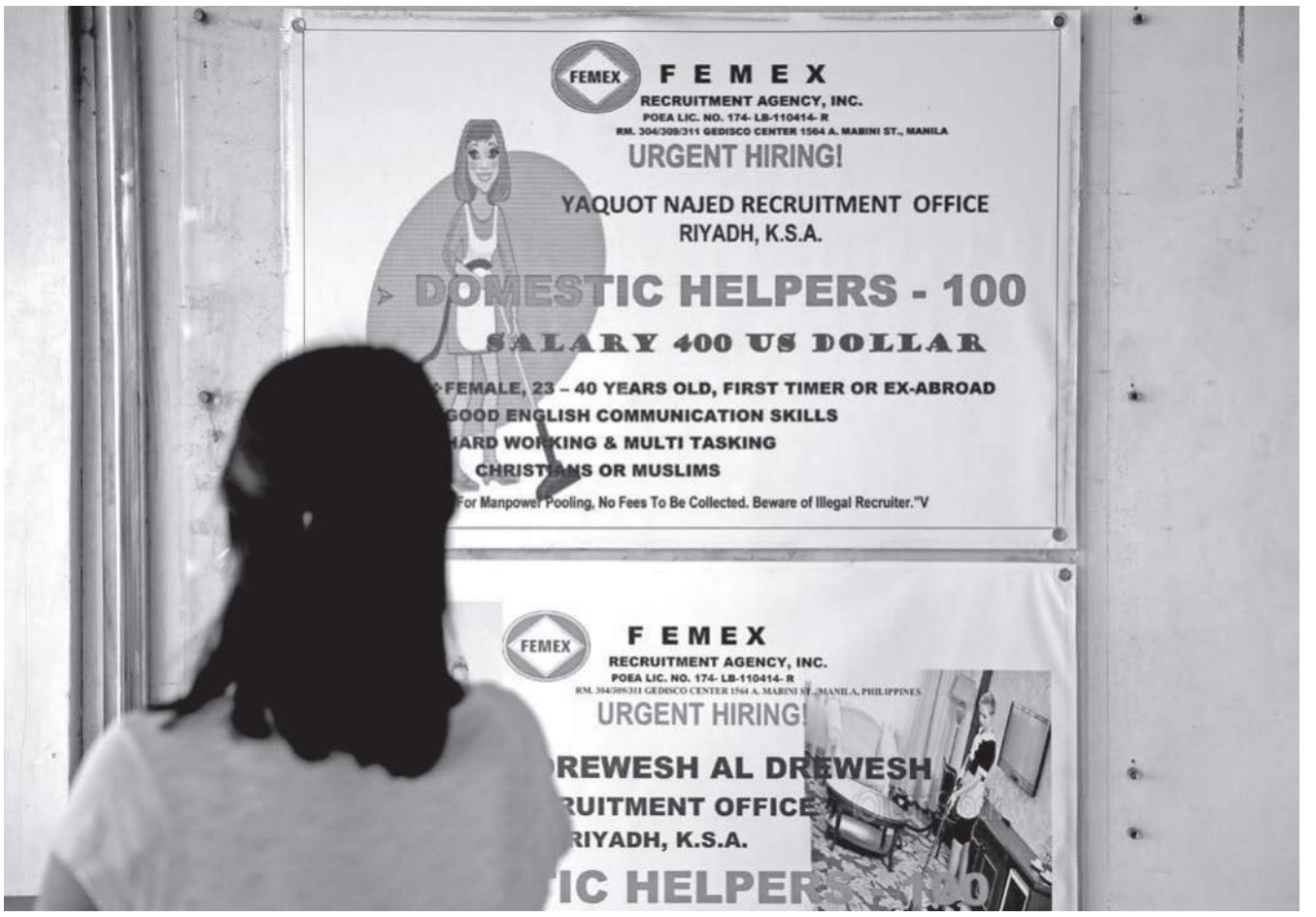
MANILA, Philippines (AP)—When Joanna Demafelis' indebted family needed money to fix their typhoon-battered home, she followed in the footsteps of millions of other Filipinos and left to find work overseas. And like far too many Filipinos, her journey ended in tragedy.

Demafelis' mutilated body was found last month inside a freezer in an abandoned apartment in Kuwait, where she worked as a housemaid for a Lebanese man and his Syrian wife. She had likely been dead for more than a year.

Demafelis' flower-draped coffin sat Friday in her family home in rural Sara town in central Iloilo province, where relatives, who had alerted authorities in 2016 that she was missing, honored her memory and called for justice.

"We'll miss her. She was so kind to all of us," her brother Joejet Demafelis said, adding hundreds of relatives and friends came on the eve of her burial.

Her slaying is the latest tragedy to befall an overseas worker from the Philippines, where about a tenth of the nation's 100 million people toil in more than 200 countries worldwide to provide for families back home. Last year, those workers sent home more than $31 billion, accounting for 10 percent of the country's gross domestic product.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For Manpower Pooling, No Fees To Be Collected. Beware of Illegal Recruiter."V
F E M E X
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URGENT HIRING!
RIYADH, K.S.A.

AP
A woman looks at help wanted signs outside a recruitment agency for jobs abroad in Manila, Philippines, Friday, March 2, 2018.

Officials warn Demafelis' death won't be the last. They say a dangerous mix of poverty, spotty enforcement of labor laws, difficult conditions especially in Arab nations, and the logistical nightmare of watching over huge numbers of workers abroad means other tragedies are inevitable.

"You gnash your teeth and ask 'Why is this happening?'" Sen. Franklin Drilon, a former labor secretary, said in an interview, adding that laws meant to protect workers needed to be enforced. "Certainly, it can happen again."

President Rodrigo Duterte has responded to Demafelis' death by banning the deployment of Filipino workers to Kuwait, though that won't affect the more than 250,000 Filipinos still working in the oil-rich nation. The Philippine senate, meanwhile, has opened an inquiry into what went wrong.

The president, who is prone at making public outbursts, also lashed out at Middle East nations.

"The Filipino is no slave to anyone, anywhere and everywhere," an enraged Duterte said shortly after Demafelis' body was found. "We send to you a Filipino worker, hale and hearty ... do not give us back a battered worker or a mutilated corpse."

But deaths among the army of Filipino workers abroad aren't new. Nearly 200 Filipino workers died in Kuwait over the last two years, mostly due to health reasons, but 22 cases were suicides or fatal criminal attacks, said Hans Cacdac, head of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration in Manila.

Cacdac said 45,000 to 50,000 "distress cases" are reported each year, many of them in Arab countries.

The sixth of nine children of a poor farmer, Demafelis did not go to college and flew to Kuwait in 2014. She had wanted to earn money to repair the family house, which was battered by Typhoon Haiyan the year before, reacquire a small piece of farmland that had been mortgaged, and help pay tuition for a sibling to finish a criminology course.

"Those were her dreams that prompted her to leave," her elder brother Joejet Demafelis told The Associated Press.

China sets stage for Xi's historic grab to rule indefinitely

BEIJING (AP)—President Xi Jinping is poised to make a historic power grab as China's legislators gather from Monday to approve changes that will let him rule indefinitely and undo decades of efforts to prevent a return to crushing dictatorship.

This year's gathering of the ceremonial National People's Congress has been overshadowed by Xi's surprise move—announced just a week ago—to end constitutional two-term limits on the presidency. The changes would allow Xi, already China's most powerful leader in decades, to extend his rule over the world's second largest economy possibly for life.

"This is a critical moment in China's history," said Cheng Li, an expert on elite China politics at the Brookings Institution in Washington.

The move is widely seen as the culmination of the 64-year-old Xi's efforts since being appointed leader of the ruling Communist Party in 2012 to concentrate power in his own hands and defy norms of collective leadership established over the past two decades. Xi has appointed himself to head bodies that oversee national security, finance, economic reform and other major initiatives, effectively sidelining the party's No. 2 figure, Premier Li Keqiang.

Once passed, the constitutional amendment would upend a system enacted by former Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping in 1982 to prevent a return to the bloody excesses of a lifelong dictatorship typified by Mao Zedong's chaotic 1966-1976 Cultural Revolution.

"Deng Xiaoping's abolishment of lifetime tenure for the leadership and more institutionalized transitions in power are very much in question," Li said.

Passage of the proposed constitutional amendment by the congress' nearly 3,000 handpicked delegates is all but certain. But observers will be looking to see how many delegates abstain from voting as an indication of the reservations the move has encountered even within the political establishment.

On Sunday, Zhang Yesui, the legislature's spokesman, told reporters the move is only aimed at bringing the office of the president in line with Xi's other positions atop the party and the Central Military Commission, which do not impose term limits.

"It is conducive to upholding the authority of the Central Committee of the party with Comrade Xi Jinping at the core and also to unified leadership," Zhang said.

Chinese authorities have tightly controlled discussion about the move, scrubbing social media of critical and satirical comments. State media have been largely muted about the topic, but the official People's Daily sought to reassure the public by saying in a commentary that the move did not signal a return to lifelong rule.

"This amendment does not mean changes in the system of retirement for party and state leaders and also does not imply that leaders will have lifetime tenure," the party's mouthpiece said Thursday.

Still, a number of prominent Chinese figures have publicly protested the move, despite the risk of official retaliation.

ASIAN BRIEFS

S. Korea to send high-level officials to North for talks

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea's presidential office says a 10-member government delegation is to visit North Korea this week for talks on how to promote peace on the Korean Peninsula. The Blue House said Sunday the delegation led by national security director Chung Eui-yong is to fly to Pyongyang on Monday for a two-day visit that includes talks with unidentified senior North Korean officials. It said the talks would also deal with how to restart talks between Pyongyang and Washington. The visit comes amid a rare moment of good will between the rivals stemming from the recent Pyeongchang Winter Olympics. Senior North Korean officials came at the start and close of the games, and they met Moon and invited him to visit Pyongyang. They said they were willing to resume talks with Washington.

President Trump OKs disaster declaration in American Samoa

PAGO PAGO, American Samoa (AP)—President Donald Trump has ordered federal assistance for American Samoa in the wake of damage caused by tropical storm Gita last month. The White House announced Friday that Trump approved the disaster declaration for the U.S. territory in order to free up funding. The assistance can go toward grants for temporary housing, home repairs, low-cost loans for property losses and other programs. He previously declared an emergency in the region Feb. 11, a few days after the storm initially hit to help the 50,000 residents. The storm pummeled the South Pacific islands, causing downed trees, damaged buildings and widespread power outages. Hundreds of people are still living in emergency shelters. Residents who sustained losses in designated areas can apply for assistance at a disaster recovery center in the coming days.

Hunt for missing Malaysian plane likely to end in June

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—The search for Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 by a U.S. company will likely end in June, a Malaysian official said, as families of passengers marked the fourth anniversary of the plane's disappearance with renewed hope that the world's biggest aviation mystery will be solved. Malaysia inked a "no cure, no fee" deal with Houston, Texas-based Ocean Infinity in January to resume the hunt for the plane, a year after the official search in the southern Indian Ocean by Malaysia, Australia and China was called off. Ocean Infinity started the search on Jan. 22 and has 90 search days to look for the plane. Malaysia's civil aviation chief, Azharuddin Abdul Rahman, said the 90-day term will spread over a few months because the search vessel has to refuel in Australia and bad weather could be a factor. Azharuddin said Saturday the search is going smoothly and is expected to end by mid-June. "The whole world, including the next of kin, have (new) hope to find the plane for closure," he told reporters at a remembrance event at a shopping mall near Kuala Lumpur. "For the aviation world, we want to know what exactly happened to the plane."

World

Brazen Burkina Faso attacks raise concern of growing threat

OUAGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso (AP)—Burkina Faso's leaders urged vigilance Saturday, a day after brazen Islamic extremist attacks on the army headquarters and French Embassy in the capital, which killed eight people. An al-Qaida-linked group based in neighboring Mali claimed responsibility for the assaults.

It was the third attack on Ouagadougou in just over two years and it was aimed directly at the army's central command and the heavily guarded embassy, raising concerns that extremists are growing bolder in their assaults on the West African nation. The attack on the army headquarters narrowly missed a conference of top military leaders, indicating the extremists may have had inside information.

Previous extremist attacks had been on soft targets of restaurants which caused a greater loss of civilian lives.

"The decision to actually stage an attack in this area (the army headquarters) where there is a permanent security presence demonstrates the growing confidence and capabilities of terror groups in the region," said Sean Smith, a West Africa politics senior analyst with Verisk Maplecroft.

Burkina Faso contributes more troops to the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Mali than other West African nations, making it an extremist target, he said.

The Mauritanian new agency Alakhbar said the militant group Jama Nusrat Ul-Islam wa Al-Muslimin issued a message late Saturday saying it was behind the attacks. The agency often carries claims of responsibility by jihadi groups for attacks staged across West Africa.

The agency said the extremist group carried out the dual attacks in Burkina Faso in retaliation for the killing of one of its leaders in a recent raid by French troops.

The group's formation, also known as JNIM, was announced in a video in March 2017 as a merger of three extremist groups: the al-Qaida-linked al-Mourabitoun, Ansar Dine and al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb. It has positioned itself as the al-Qaida branch in Mali, and Islamic State in the Greater Sahara, and has claimed attacks not only in Mali but in Niger.

Several extremist groups have also vowed to step up the bloodshed in response to the recent deployment of the multinational G5 Sahel force. The 5,000-strong force combines troops from Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Chad and Mauritania to battle extremism in the region.

Islamic extremists have carried out two other large-scale attacks on Ouagadougou in recent years, killing 30 people at a popular cafe in 2016 and 18 more at a Turkish restaurant in August 2017.

Friday's attacks killed at least eight people, including a senior officer, and left more than 80 injured.

AP

Security forces outside the General Staff of the Armed Forces building in central Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, Saturday March 3, 2018.

Source: AP
Graphic: Staff, TNS

Burkina Faso's President Roch Marc Christian Kabore condemned the violence in a speech broadcast to the nation on Saturday.

"Nothing, absolutely nothing, can justify such indiscriminate fury against the Burkinabe state, its institutions and the brave people who love peace, democracy, justice and progress," he said.

Burkina Faso's Prime Minister Paul Kaba Thieba said he is revolted by the Islamic militants' attacks and said the government and people must remain on guard.

"What just happened to us is a lesson, and we need to remain vigilant and also ready to anticipate on the modus operandi of the terrorists," Thieba said, announcing the government will put in place new measures to "protect institutions."

The French ambassador to Burkina Faso, Xavier Lapeyre de Cabanes, expressed solidarity with Burkina Faso.

WORLD BRIEFS

Campaign rally for Putin's re-election fills Moscow stadium

MOSCOW (AP)—Tens of thousands of Russian President Vladimir Putin's supporters have gathered for a campaign rally at Moscow's sprawling main sports complex. The crowd at the rally held two weeks before Russia's presidential election filled the Luzhniki stadium, which has the capacity for more than 81,000 people. Police estimated the overall turnout at the complex, which includes other sports facilities, to be 130,000. The event on Saturday featured entertainers and an appearance by Putin. He told the cheering crowd: "We want to make our country bright, forward-looking into the future, because our ancestors lived here, we live here, our children live here and our children and our grandchildren will live here." Putin is seeking a fourth term and faces no significant opposition in the March 18 election.

Dam executive arrested in death of Honduran activist

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (AP)—Honduran authorities arrested an executive with a dam development company Friday in the 2016 killing of indigenous and environmental activist Berta Caceres, calling him an intellectual author of a crime that sparked an international outcry. Roberto David Castillo Mejia, who at the time of the slaying was executive president of the company Desarrollos Energeticos SA, or DESA, was detained at an airport in San Pedro Sula as he was about to fly to Houston, Texas, said Jorge Galindo, a spokesman for the prosecutors' office. It was the ninth arrest in the killing of Caceres, a Goldman Environmental Prize winner who was shot to death two years ago after attackers barged into her home in La Esperanza. Castillo is charged with being an "intellectual author" in the crime, which generally applies to someone alleged to have been involved in a crime but not at the scene. Two others have been arrested for allegedly impeding the investigation.

Israeli police question Netanyahu over telecom case

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israeli police questioned Benjamin Netanyahu and his wife as part of an investigation into a corruption case involving the country's telecom giant on Friday, casting a shadow on the prime minister's upcoming visit to Washington. Police investigators entered Netanyahu's residence Friday morning. An Associated Press cameraman saw them leave about five hours later. Netanyahu's wife, Sara, was questioned at another location at the same time as the prime minister. Police later issued a statement saying the couple "were questioned for a number of hours as part of an investigation" by police and the Israel Securities Authority. Last month, two Netanyahu confidants were arrested on suspicion of promoting regulation worth hundreds of millions of dollars to the Bezeq telecom company. In return, Bezeq's news site, Walla, allegedly provided positive Netanyahu coverage. It was the first time that Netanyahu, who as prime minister also held the communications portfolio until last year, was questioned over the affair, known as Case 4000.

As Italy votes, Europe fears populist, euroskeptic gains

ROME (AP)—Italians voted Sunday in one of the most uncertain elections in years and one that could determine if Italy will succumb to the populist, euroskeptic and far-right sentiment that has swept through Europe.

The campaign was marked by the prime-time airing of neofascist rhetoric and anti-migrant violence that culminated in a shooting spree last month against six Africans. While the center-right coalition that capitalized on the anti-migrant sentiment led the polls, analysts predict the likeliest outcome is a hung parliament.

That will necessitate days and weeks of back-room haggling and horse trading to come up with a coalition government that can win confidence votes in Parliament. Just which parties coalesce from among the three main blocs—the center-right coalition, center-left coalition and the anti-establishment 5-Star Movement—will determine Italy's course.

"Basically it is very likely that, at the end of the day, none of these three groups will have an absolute majority and they will be forced to start talking to each other and see how to put together a coalition government," said Franco Pavoncello, dean of the John Cabot University in Rome.

More than 46 million Italians were eligible to vote from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. (0600-2200GMT), including Italians abroad who already mailed in ballots. Exit polls were expected after polls closed, projections sometime thereafter and consolidated results Monday.

With unemployment at 10.8 percent and economic growth in the eurozone's third-largest economy lagging the average, many Italians have all but given up hope for change. Polls indicated a third hadn't decided or weren't even sure they would vote.

"The situation is pretty bad," said Paolo Mercorillo from Ragusa, Sicily, who said he had decided not to even bother casting a ballot. "There aren't candidates who are valid enough."

The 5-Star Movement hoped to capitalize on such disgust, particularly among Italy's young, and polls indicated the grassroots movement launched in 2009 by comic Beppe Grillo with the mantra for Italy's political establishment to "(expletive)-off" would be the largest vote-getter among any single party.

But the 5-Stars weren't expected to win enough to govern on their own, and they have sworn off forming coalitions. The movement's leader Luigi Di Maio has recently suggested he would be open to talking with potential allies, however.

Focus

By The Associated Press

AP
Megan Longstreet holds up a sign as she stands in solidarity with victims of Florida's Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting, Wednesday, Feb. 28, 2018, in Greensboro, N.C. The group Indivisible Guilford County held the rally to push for new gun control measures.

Global school security measures vary, but no arming teachers

The United States is in the midst of a national debate over school security after the mass shooting at a Florida school.

To President Donald Trump and some gun supporters, the solution is to put more guns in the hands of trained school staff—including teachers—to "play defense" against a rampaging gunman.

The rest of the world has different strategies to deal with violence around schools. But the U.S. appears to be the only place in the world where some want to arm teachers to the degree the president wants.

Rather, emergency drills, armed guards patrolling school campuses and intruder drills seem to be more of the norm.

Here is a look at school security measures at some countries around the world.

ISRAEL

Education Ministry spokesman Amos Shavit said "the vast majority of schools have armed security guards" and those that don't are supposed to have heavy locks and security systems.

Visitors to the school are questioned by the guard, who checks their bags and sometimes uses a hand-held metal detector. Entry is strictly forbidden to anyone without authorization, Shavit said.

That's augmented by municipal security units that work in conjunction with police. "If there is an incident at a school they will be there in a minute or less," Shavit said.

He said the small number of teachers who have a legal gun license and usually carry a weapon can do so as well in school, but that this is not policy or encouraged. "Teachers here aren't supposed to be carrying weapons in classrooms, teachers are supposed to teach," he said.

RUSSIA

Violent incidents have been rare in Russian schools in recent years, but two attacks last month attracted nationwide attention and drew comparisons to the school violence in the U.S.

In one, a teenager armed with an ax attacked fellow students at a school in southern Siberia, wounding five children and a teacher. In another attack in the Urals city of Perm, two teenagers stabbed children and their teacher with knives, wounding 15 people. They then attempted to kill each other, but were detained.

The incidents highlighted lax security in schools, triggering calls for stronger protection.

Now, there are security guards at Russian schools.

FRANCE

In the wake of deadly terror attacks in Paris and Nice, France introduced new security guidelines at schools when children went back to classes in September 2016.

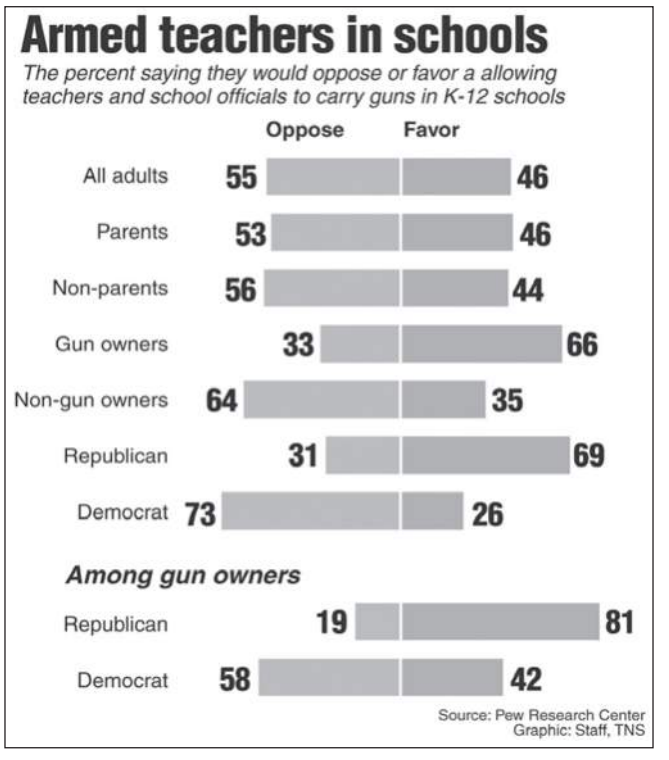
The measures, which remain in place, include a tighter screening of people entering schools, which can include bag checks, and improved coordination with police.

Police officers patrol in school areas, while parents and students are requested to avoid gathering near schools and report any suspicious behavior or object. French schools also hold three security drills a year, including one in which an alleged assailant enters their premises. Students are taught how to hide or to escape.

All students aged 13 to 14 and class representatives also get basic training on life-saving measures. In pre-school and kindergarten, for toddlers aged 2 to 6, children are taught to hide and keep quiet through games.

JAPAN

Attacks on schools are rare in Japan, where there have been a handful of knifings, but guns are practically non-existent. Security measures at Japanese schools became compulsory only after a June 2001 attack at an Osaka elementary school, where eight children were stabbed to death and 15 others were injured by an intruder who was later sentenced to death and executed.


Armed teachers in schools
The percent saying they would oppose or favor a allowing teachers and school officials to carry guns in K-12 schools
Oppose
Favor
All adults 55 46
Parents 53 46
Non-parents 56 44
Gun owners 33 66
Non-gun owners 64 35
Republican 31 69
Democrat 73 26
Among gun owners
Republican 19 81
Democrat 58 42
Source: Pew Research Center
Graphic: Staff, TNS

Japanese schools generally do not allow outsiders to freely walk into schools without getting permission at the gate, which is usually closed during school hours. Parents or other visitors must wear a pass to go in. Schools are also required to have an emergency manual in case of crime or accident at school or while children are walking to or from school. Some schools have set up security cameras, or teachers sometimes take turns patrolling during breaks or lunchtime.

Parents or neighborhood volunteers usually stand along designated commuting routes or intersections to watch kids as they walk to and from school. Children usually carry handheld alarms attached to their school bags that they can use in an emergency while they are on the road. Schools, PTA and students set up commuting routes and draw safety maps.

ITALY

Rome has been spared any terrorism-related attacks, but international schools in Italy's capital have been deemed "soft targets" for several years and receive extra security.

Several have army jeeps with machine-gun toting soldiers standing guard. The measures are similar for embassies as well as popular outdoor gathering spots, such as the Campo dei Fiori market in Rome's historic center. The increased security is more a response to Islamic terrorism fears than mentally unstable people getting hold of weapons.

There have been no visible signs of increased security at public schools.

"In my country, teachers teach. They don't open fire," Matteo Salvini, who heads the right-wing League party, said recently in response to questions about his views on the Trump administration.

SWEDEN

The Swedish National Agency for Education has issued a pamphlet for schools with general advice about what to do in case of an armed attack, including locking a door or barricading oneself, evacuating the premises and seeking shelter. The brochure says the guidelines are general because school buildings can vary.

There were no changes in security ordered after a 2015 attack on a school in the industrial town of Trollhattan, in which three people were killed by a masked sword-wielding man who eventually was shot and killed by police. An investigation found that the attack was racially motivated; the school was located in a neighborhood with a large immigrant population.

POLAND

There is no armed security in Polish schools, which have not experienced any mass attacks.

In most schools, visitors need to ring in to be admitted. Janitors at the doors are supposed to ask what brings them to the school.

The main concerns are drug dealers and also truancy.

Kindergartens are locked, mainly to prevent kids from wandering into the street or someone other than the parent picking up a child without written permission.

MEXICO

Mexico's ongoing drug war has driven schools in Baja California, Monterrey, Ciudad Juarez and some other cities to hold emergency drills to instruct teachers and students what to do in case of gunfire that sometimes breaks out outside schools during drug cartel shootouts.

Students are usually advised to drop to the floor, seek cover behind walls, remain calm and crawl to safety.

NIGERIA

Nigeria's president has ordered security forces to defend all schools in "liberated areas" of the country's northeast to avoid further mass abductions from schools by Boko Haram extremists.

The order follows last month's kidnapping of 110 girls at a school in Dapchi town, and requires leaders of police and civil defense forces to coordinate with the military and the governors of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states.

Shettima Kullima, executive chairman of the Universal Basic Education Board in northern Nigeria's Borno state, ruled out guns even in schools where soldiers serve as teachers and said students should be trained to be aware of security threats.

Students would find armed teachers "highly distractive and disorienting" and could associate teachers with fear, said Yusuf Tom, a teacher in Maiduguri. Better to have private security guards frisking people at the entrances of schools plus metal detectors, he said.

According to data from UNICEF and the Borno state government, about 1,397 schools have been destroyed in the state by Boko Haram extremists and 2,295 teachers killed since 2009.

In Yobe state, where the latest mass abduction occurred, the government has said it is deploying armed security personnel to schools in remote locations.

Health & Fitness

RUNNER'S SCIENCE:

Research predicts, prevents injuries in athletes

For the past 11 years, a team of physicians and researchers at Mayo Clinic has been collecting data from athletes in an attempt to predict and prevent running injuries.

Runner's Science, as the research study is known, studies the effects of distance running on the human body. The project was launched in 2008 alongside the inaugural 26.2 with Donna—The National Marathon to Finish Breast Cancer, a race founded by Mayo Clinic patient Donna Deegan to support cancer research. With almost 10,000 athletes from all 50 states and several countries, the marathon provides researchers with a diverse pool of study participants.

"The objective of Runner's Science is to look into various problems that runners have so we can understand why they happen. If we can understand more about why these diseases or injuries happen, then we can start to look at ways to prevent them and fix them," says Dr. Sara Filmalter, a Mayo Clinic family and sports medicine physician.

"The most common injuries runners experience are lower extremity injuries—mostly knee pain, hip pain, and foot and ankle pain," she adds.

Over the past decade, research has looked at how food and fluid intake, foot strike and training distances affect runners.

"In the early years, we obtained a lot of data on runners with race-related injuries, and we found that undertraining for a race can lead to injuries during the event," says Dr. Filmalter. "Our research showed, for example, half-marathon runners who ran less than three days per week during training, or whose long run was less than 10 miles at the peak of their training were more at risk for injury during their race."

Runner's Science also uncovered significant findings related to food and fluid intake, and finishing time.

"We've found that runners who consume whole food during a distance race have slower paces, compared to the runners consuming gels, who had faster paces," says Dr. Filmalter.

"Additionally, we found that runners with slower paces tend to be at the greatest risk for exercise-induced hyponatremia or low sodium, which can be very detrimental—even deadly. We found that slower runners stop more often and consume more water."

Dr. Filmalter's recommendation: "Regardless of pace, we recommend runners drink to thirst and remember to consumer some beverages that have electrolytes in them, such as sports drinks."

Most recently, Runner's Science has been reviewing specific body parts to help determine whether differences in size, shape or thickness will predispose a runner to pain or injury.

"This year, Runner's Science will focus on ultrasound evaluation of Achilles tendons in runners who do not have any pain there. We're trying to see any differences that may predict whether or not a runner has issues with their tendons in the future," says Dr. Filmalter. ***(Mayo Clinic News Network/TNS)***

Instead of nagging your spouse to lose weight, try going on a diet yourself

By KAREN KAPLAN
LOS ANGELES TIMES/TNS

Tired of nagging your spouse to lose a few pounds? You might get better results by going on a diet yourself.

Health experts have seen that the weight status of couples tends to move in sync. It is often similar when they get married, and if one partner gains weight over time, the other does as well. In fact, researchers have found that if one half a couple becomes obese, the risk that the other will follow suit rises by 37 percent.

There are signs that the reverse is true as well. A long-term population study in England suggests that when one spouse loses weight, a "ripple effect" extends to the other spouse. Another study of bariatric surgery patients found that nearly two-thirds of their spouses were lighter a year after the procedure, with a median weight loss of just under 3 pounds.

Researchers led by psychologist Amy Gorin of the University of Connecticut set out to see whether they could replicate these results in a randomized controlled trial. They recruited 130 couples in which one partner was willing to try a weight-loss program and the other was not. To be included, the partner on the program had to be either overweight or obese (with a body mass index between 27 and 40) and the other partner had to be overweight (with a BMI over 25).

Couples did not have to be married, though 121 of them were. Four of the couples were in same-sex relationships.

The couples were randomly assigned to one of two groups. In one group, one of the partners received a free six-month membership to Weight Watchers, which included access to meetings and the use of digital tools to track eating and exercise habits. (The study was funded in part by Weight Watchers International.) In the other group, one of the partners got a simple four-page handout with information about exercise and healthy eating.

The weight status of couples tends to move in sync. DREAMSTIME

All of the participants were weighed and measured by professionals at the start of the study, three months in, and at the six-month mark.

In both groups, the partners who actively participated in a weight-loss program generally succeeded in losing weight. After six months of effort, those in the Weight Watchers group lost 9.5 pounds (or 4.5 percent of their body weight), on average, while those who got the handout lost nearly 7 pounds (or 3.2 percent of their body weight), on average. Those differences were not large enough to be statistically significant.

But Gorin and her colleagues were more interested in what had happened to the other half of these couples.

The partners of those who used Weight Watchers lost nearly 5 pounds, on average, and the partners of those who got the worksheet lost a little more than 4 pounds, on average. After six months, the average percentage of weight loss was an identical 2.09 percent for both groups.

For the people who weren't actively trying to lose weight—but did so anyway—it didn't matter whether their partner was using Weight Watchers or the "self-guided" approach detailed on the handout. Nor did it matter if they were male or female, or if they overweight or obese when their partners began their weight-loss program.

Experts believe the health benefits of weight loss kick in after body mass drops by 3 percent. Overall, 32 percent of the nondieting partners achieved that goal.

The researchers created mathematical models to predict how much weight the study participants would lose in each three-month period. Those models had errors, but those errors followed a distinctive pattern.

"If one member of a couple lost more (or less) than predicted at any given time point, the other member of the couple also lost more (or less) than predicted," the researchers wrote.

The results bolster the case that couples have a significant influence on each others' weight—for good or for bad. But longer-term studies will be needed to see whether people can maintain this "ripple effect" weight loss, the team noted.

The researchers used direct mail and online advertisements to recruit study participants, and offered to pay them $100 each if they completed the study. They wound up with a sample that was 96 percent Caucasian. Future studies will need to be more diverse to assess whether the ripple effect applies to other racial and ethnic groups, the researchers wrote.

Healthy Living

Eat more, weigh less

On the Volumetrics Plan, you can fill up on low-density, low-calorie foods and lose weight.

Some low-density foods to enjoy

No more than 1.25 calories per gram

0.3 cal/g	0.4cal/g	0.4 cal/g
Berries	Low-fat yogurt	Tomato soup

Some high-density foods to avoid

3.6 cal/g	5.4 cal/g	7.4 cal/g
Salami	Potato chips	Butter

Source: Penn State University, Study of Human Ingestive Behavior

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Life & Style

Trump, Alec Baldwin renew Twitter feud

NEW YORK (AP)—President Donald Trump and Alec Baldwin—his chief impersonator—traded online barbs Friday, each describing the other as causing "agony," the latest salvos in an ongoing feud between the commander in chief and the actor.

Trump, who has long grumbled about the way he is portrayed by Baldwin on "Saturday Night Live," began the latest spat in a tweet sandwiched between his observations about world trade and the opioid crisis. (In an initial tweet that was later deleted, he misspelled the actor's first name as "Alex," prompting "Alex Baldwin" to trend on Twitter.)

The president seemed to be reacting to an interview Baldwin gave to The Hollywood Reporter that was published Thursday in which the actor said he doesn't enjoy parodying Trump: "Every time I do it now, it's like agony. Agony. I can't."

Wrote Trump on Friday: "Alec Baldwin, whose dying mediocre career was saved by his terrible impersonation of me on SNL, now says playing me was agony. Alec, it was agony for those who were forced to watch."

In a final dig, the president said Baldwin's performance wasn't as good as comedian Darrell Hammond, who portrayed Trump on "Saturday Night Live" for years before Baldwin took over in September 2016. "Bring back Darrell Hammond, funnier and a far greater talent!" Trump tweeted.

In this Jan. 27, 2013 file photo, Alex Baldwin arrives at the 19th Annual Screen Actors Guild Awards at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles. AP

Baldwin responded in a series of tweets.

"Agony though it may be, I'd like to hang in there for the impeachment hearings, the resignation speech, the farewell helicopter ride," he wrote.

Baldwin also tweeted that he was "Looking forward to the Trump Presidential Library" and suggested that it would contain a live Twitter feed and "a little black book w the phone numbers of porn stars." (He also misspelled Trump's Florida estate Mar-a-Lago as "Mara-A-Lago.")

Hammond did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Baldwin, a Democratic activist, received an Emmy Award for his parody last year on "Saturday Night Live." He and Trump, who appeared as a guest host on "SNL" in November 2015, have attacked each other on Twitter before. In 2016, the then-president elect called a skit that satirized Trump's tweets as "sad," prompting Baldwin to respond: "Release your tax returns and I'll stop. Ha."

Trump also complained to Matt Lauer in an interview that year that Baldwin's portrayal of him wasn't funny. "The skits are terrible. I like Alec, but his imitation of me is really mean-spirited and not very good ... It's very biased and I don't like it."

Baldwin and Trump also exchanged sharp tweets after the election when the president-elect called "Saturday Night Live" a "totally one-sided, biased show" and asked, "Equal time for us?" Baldwin responded: "Election is over. There is no more equal time."

"Saturday Night Live" has found higher ratings and more cultural relevance since Trump ran for office, with skits that have also lampooned Oval Office figures such as Sarah Huckabee Sanders, Jeff Sessions, Sean Spicer, Steve Bannon, Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump. Five days before his 2017 inauguration, Trump tweeted about the show: "Not funny, cast is terrible, always a complete hit job. Really bad television!"

Close watch to see how Trump handles expected Gridiron jabs

WASHINGTON (AP)—Donald Trump decided to mingle with members of the mainstream media he loves to lash out against, and his presidential debut at Washington's annual Gridiron dinner was certain to invite close watch to see how he handled the expected ribbing.

The white-tie gala Saturday is the kind of establishment event that Trump has shunned since taking office. But what was supposed to be a good-natured bread-breaking between the president and press could become a flashpoint if Trump, who has labeled reporters "fake news" and the "enemy of the American people," proves unable to poke fun at himself or take a lashing from the press.

The president got an early start, tweeting from Florida before his late afternoon return to Washington: "Mainstream Media in U.S. is being mocked all over the world. They've gone CRAZY!"

David Litt, a former speechwriter for President Barack Obama who helped write many of Obama's comedy speeches, said he thinks Trump "is in a potentially strange spot where he either attacks the press in a way that works really well at a rally but just gets crickets in that room, or he has spent the past two years calling reporters 'fake news' and then suddenly admits it's just the act."

At the dinner, journalists in costume perform song parodies before politicians from both parties give their speeches. The Gridiron's motto—"singe, don't burn"—suggests speakers should feel free to poke and prod, but gingerly. Every president since Grover Cleveland has been subjected at least once.

Trump skipped the event last year and sent Vice President Mike Pence instead. Trump also passed up the White House Correspondents' Association dinner. It's not known whether he will attend that dinner on April 28; his Gridiron reception could serve as a test.

Despite Trump's reputation for being notoriously thin-skinned, Trump has subjected himself to roasts in the past.

At New York City's Friar's Club in 2004, Regis Philbin and others skewered the New York City real estate developer for his sexual escapades and business failures. Video of the event shows Trump laughing heartily and delivering a rebuttal that was classic Trump.

In addition to thanking his wife and mocking Philbin's height, Trump bragged about his success in developing casinos in Atlantic City, New Jersey, and claimed he'd drawn the "biggest crowd they've ever had."

Seven years later, Trump agreed to be pilloried at a 2011 Comedy Central roast that included Snoop Dogg, Seth MacFarlane and Mike "The Situation" Sorrentino. Trump scowled through most of the event, said Ray James, who served as lead writer.

'Get Out' wins for best film, director at Spirit Awards

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (AP)—Jordan Peele's "Get Out" won best film and best director on Saturday at the 33rd Independent Film Spirit Awards, a day before the horror sensation will vie for top honors at the Academy Awards.

The wins for Peele's directorial debut gave the Spirits, a celebration of indie filmmaking, something unusual: a box-office behemoth. Made for just $4.5 million, "Get Out" grossed $255 million worldwide.

"We are in the beginning of a renaissance right now, where stories from the outsider, stories from the people in this room, the same stories that independent filmmakers have been telling for years are being honored and recognized and celebrated," Peele said.

Peele was presented the award for best director by Spike Lee, whom Peele said paved his way. "Let's make no mistake," he said. "I wouldn't be standing here if wasn't for this man."

"Get Out" is only the second horror film to win best picture at the Spirits. The other was 2010's "Black Swan."

"This project didn't start as a statement," said Peele. "It began as me wanting to make a film in my favorite genre. I sat down and would smoke a little weed and try to write a mind-bending horror film, my favorite genre and at some point I followed the truth and I realized there are people locked up for smoking less weed than I smoked writing the movie."

Held in a beachside tent on a floor soaked through from rain earlier in the day, the Spirit Awards are the dressed-down, boozy prelude to Sunday's Academy Awards.

But as the Oscars have gravitated toward honoring indie films, the two have come closer to mirroring each other. The last four Spirit winners for best film ("Moonlight," ''Spotlight," ''Birdman," ''12 Years a Slave") have won best picture at the Oscars.

"It's Saturday," Peele said backstage of his Oscar expectations. "Tomorrow's tomorrow. That's what's up."

The Spirits are also a party to mark the (almost) end of a long and sometimes repetitive awards season.

"I continue to be amazed that you let me get to the microphone. What are you crazy?" said Frances McDormand, who again won best actress for her performance in "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri." ''Do you know how hard it's been not to swear over the last couple of months? Because this awards convention goes on for (expletive) forever."

Allison Janney likewise continued her sweep of the best supporting actress awards for "I, Tonya." The supporting actor Oscar favorite Sam Rockwell ("Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri") added to his string of awards.

Razzie Awards name 'The Emoji Movie' worst film of 2017

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Maybe it was destiny for a movie with a pile of poop as a central character.

"The Emoji Movie" has received Hollywood's most famous frown, the Razzie Award , for worst picture of 2017, making it the first animated feature in 38 years to earn the top dishonor.

"Leading this year's list of movie-misfires is the emoticon-based, talking poop opus," the Razzies said in a statement announcing the recipients, saying the film came in a year when "Hollywood's recycled trash heap attained an all-time high" and saw a "toxic-level lack of originality."

The annual awards bestowed on the worst the movie business has to offer were announced Saturday in their traditional spot, the day before the Academy Awards.

"The Emoji Movie" landed four of the 10 Razzies given out this year, also taking worst screenplay, worst director, and worst screen combo, which was given to "any two obnoxious emojis" from the movie.

Tom Cruise's attempted reboot of the "Mummy" franchise landed him worst actor. He now has no Oscars after three nominations, but two Razzies. Cruise and Brad Pitt won for worst screen couple for 1994's "Interview with the Vampire."

Tyler Perry took worst actress for "Boo 2! A Madea Halloween," the director's 10th time donning a dress and playing his signature white-wigged matriarch.

Kim Basinger took worst supporting actress for "Fifty Shades Darker," putting her in the special company of Faye Dunaway, Liza Minelli and Halle Berry as actresses who have won both a Razzie and an Oscar.

Mel Gibson, who last year won the "Redeemer" award for getting an Oscar nomination just a few years after getting a Razzie nomination, is back at the bottom again as far as the Razzies are concerned, taking worst supporting actor for "Daddy's Home 2."

"Baywatch," won the inaugural "Special Rotten Tomatoes Award: The Razzie Nominee So Bad You Loved It!" The award is the result of an online poll held in conjunction with the review site Rotten Tomatoes.

The rest of the Razzie Awards are determined by what the organization says is over 1,000 voting Razzie members 27 countries and from every U.S. state except Montana.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Teen gets prison for terror plots, including Bieber concert

LONDON (AP) — A 17-year-old Welsh teen has been sentenced to at least 11 years in prison after being convicted of plotting an Islamic State-inspired attack on various targets including a Justin Bieber concert. Judge Mark Wall on Friday sentenced Lloyd Gunton to an indeterminate sentence after concluding he had a total "disregard for human life." Evidence during his trial showed that Gunton had researched several targets in Cardiff, the Welsh capital, including a shopping center and Bieber's performance on June 30, 2017. The teen lives in Llantrisant in south Wales. At the sentencing, Wall said "it's not possible to estimate how many people would have been murdered or seriously injured by your actions, as the attack was foiled." Gunton, who suffers from an autism spectrum disorder, was convicted at Birmingham Crown Court last November.

Marathon director hopes new book helps kids keep dreaming

BOSTON (AP) — Boston Marathon race director Dave McGillivray has an additional job title: children's book author. McGillivray's new book, "Dream Big: A True Story of Courage and Determination," is being launched Wednesday in Boston. McGillivray says it's a nonfiction picture book for young readers aged 6 to 10, based on an autobiography he wrote in 2006. He says his message to youngsters is how to cope with doubt, disappointment and loss. McGillivray writes about dreaming of becoming a professional athlete but struggling because he was a short kid. He eventually turned to running, achieved success as a competitive marathoner and has been in charge of the Boston Marathon since 1998. McGillivray says the book will be distributed free to children in a dozen schools around Massachusetts.

Julianne Moore urges NY lawmakers to pass Child Victims Act

NEW YORK (AP) — Actress Julianne Moore is joining the chorus of advocates calling on New York state lawmakers to allow victims of child sexual abuse to seek justice from the courts decades later. Moore said in an op-ed in the Daily News on Friday that she was "shocked" to learn that New York is one of the least victim-friendly states in the nation. Advocates for survivors of sex abuse have urged New York's state legislature to pass the Child Victims Act. The act would extend criminal and civil statutes of limitations. It also would create a one-year window for victims to file civil lawsuits against their alleged abusers even if the current statute of limitations on civil suits has passed. Victims blame Republicans in the state Senate for holding up the bill.

Emma Stone, Viola Davis help fete female Oscar nominees

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)—Viola Davis is good in a pinch.

Last year's best supporting actress Oscar-winner was sipping champagne at the annual Women in Film pre-Oscar cocktail event Friday night when the organization's president, Cathy Schulman, herself an Oscar-winner for "Crash," asked Davis if she could give a few remarks.

"I'm only doing this Cathy because I love you," Davis said before launching into a story about a time when she told her then five-year-old daughter that she was "complicated" and had to explain to her why that was a good thing.

"With all of our imperfections, with all of our complexities and confusion, we're worth it. This is a year of owning who we are," Davis said. "Even the women who are still in silence, the women who stepped up and spoke up, the women nominees, the women who could have been, should have been nominees. We're all worth it. That's what we need to come into the room with. That's what we need to go into 2018 and '19 with. The privilege of a lifetime is being exactly who we are."

The event's co-host Emma Stone, who won the best actress Oscar last year, took the stage next.

"No one should ever have to follow Viola Davis," she sighed.

AP

Olivia Wilde attends the 11th Annual Women In Film Pre-Oscar Cocktail Party at Crustacean restaurant on Friday, March 2, 2018, in Los Angeles.

The event held at the Beverly Hills restaurant Crustacean saw a host of Oscar nominees including Greta Gerwig, Margot Robbie, Agnes Varda, Diane Warren and entertainment bigwigs mingling before Sunday's big event. Keegan Michael-Key posted up at Davis's table, before finding "The Big Sick" screenwriting nominees/real-life couple Kumail Nanjiani and Emily V. Gordon. "La La Land" producer Jordan Horowitz made the rounds with his wife, director Julia Hart, whose next film "Fast Color" premieres at the SXSW Film Festival in March. And "Battle of the Sexes" actress Andrea Riseborough met "Thoroughbreds" star Anya Taylor-Joy, while Jason Sudeikis and Olivia Wilde roamed the party side-by-side.

This marked the 11th annual Women in Film Pre-Oscar Cocktail party, although the organization has been working to advance women's careers in film and television since 1973. The organization was one of the first in the #MeToo era to launch a helpline to advise and counsel women who are experiencing sexual harassment or discrimination.

Schulman also noted that there has been a small increase in female nominees at this year's Oscars, up from 46 to 48, but that there is still work to be done.

"We're at an absolute tipping point right now," Schulman said. "And it takes all of us to do the important work necessary to turn this tipping point into actual systemic change so that women's careers can be long, sustainable and successful."

Man's choice of wedding day steals spotlight from stepmom

DEAR ABBY: I'm struggling because my stepson has chosen to get married on my birthday. I have been his stepmom for 18 years. It feels like a punch in the chest. My in-law family members are saying things like "OMG, how do you feel about that? I can't believe you're going to let that happen. It will no longer be YOUR special day."

My feelings are deeply hurt. My husband says it's no big deal and I shouldn't let it bother me. But every time someone asks me about it, I feel hurt, and when I'm finally by myself, I cry. I don't know what to do. I need someone's help. Is what my stepson is doing bad etiquette, a slap in the face or no big deal?

BIRTHDAY GIRL IN ILLINOIS

DEAR BIRTHDAY GIRL: That your stepson would be married on your birthday isn't a slap in the face; it's a compliment. If you like his fiancee, consider her to be the ultimate birthday present. I'm surprised anyone would imply, as your in-laws have, that their anniversary would create any kind of conflict. Think of it this way: Your stepson and his new wife will never forget your birthday.

DEAR ABBY: As a single man, I have been on a few dating websites, and I'd like to say something to the women I have encountered: What is it about you that makes you worth my time to pursue? Many women show a lot of pictures, but reveal very little about themSELVES. Then some of them say in their last sentence that they "want more than 10 words to say hello." These women seem well-educated but unable to write more than a short paragraph about who they are.

Ladies, if you want more than a hi or hello, write something about yourselves beyond your likes and dislikes. Describe who you are, what your hopes and dreams are, and say something that I, as a man, would respond to in my introduction. If you did, it would help me to determine whether I should pursue you.

IN THE DARK

DEAR IN THE DARK: You make a valid point. I'll be sure to reread your letter if I ever need to join a dating site, and so, I am sure, will my "sisters" out there. Thanks for the heads-up!

DEAR ABBY: My sister-in-law has had an incredible amount of cosmetic work done, particularly on her face. She is constantly looking for the next new thing to try to look younger —"push this up, tighten that up, erase these marks," etc.

She is a pretty girl, and she thinks this is making her better-looking, but it's making her look worse. Should I let her know how I feel about what she's doing or leave it alone?

AGING GRACEFULLY

DEAR AGING GRACEFULLY: What your sister-in-law does with her face and body is her business, just as what you are doing—or not doing—with yours is your choice. Much as you are tempted to tell her that her attempts to look better are futile, if you want a cordial relationship with her, keep your opinion to yourself.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

HEY, CALVIN! GUESS WHAT TIME IT IS!
WHY? WHAT TIME IS IT?
IT'S A VERY SPECIAL TIME!
OH BOY, OH BOY! WHAT TIME IS IT?
DO YOU REALLY WANT TO KNOW?
YES, YES! TELL ME! TELL ME! QUICK! PLEASE! YES!
IT'S YOUR BATH TIME! OH BOY!!
YOU KNOW HOW OLD PEOPLE ALWAYS WRITE TO DEAR ABBY, COMPLAINING THAT THEIR KIDS NEVER WRITE, CALL, OR VISIT? THOSE LETTERS REALLY CRACK ME UP.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

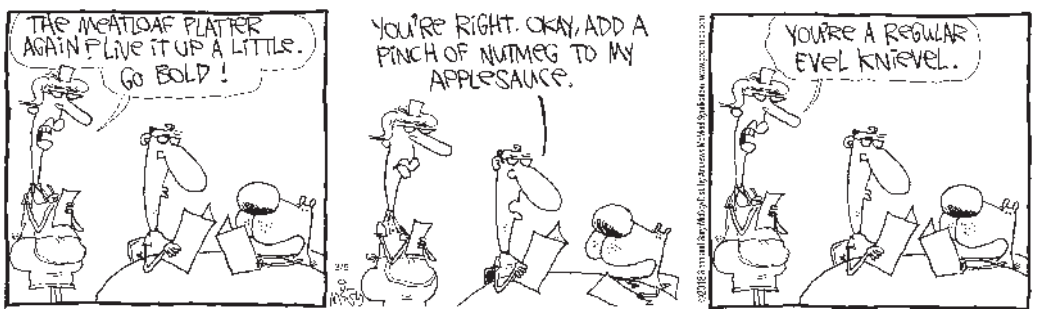
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

YOU OKAY?
HMM? OH, YEP. YEP.
I STAYED UP ALL NIGHT WITH NO COFFEE TRYING TO GET EXHAUSTED.
MY SLEEP-WRITING WAS SO GOOD, I'M TRYING TO MAKE IT HAPPEN AGAIN.
SOUNDS LEGIT. ANY LUCK SO FAR?
WELL, I NODDED OFF AROUND 4 A.M. AND TYPED "ASDJKLMMM."

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


THE MEATLOAF PLATTER AGAIN? LIVE IT UP A LITTLE. GO BOLD!
YOU'RE RIGHT. OKAY, ADD A PINCH OF NUTMEG TO MY APPLESAUCE.
YOU'RE A REGULAR EVEL KNIEVEL.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Now, on a memo
5 Sphere
8 Rights org.
12 Illicit
14 Ergo
15 Pink wading bird
16 Employ
17 Rock's Brian
18 Destroys
20 Point of view
23 Composer — Carlo Menotti
24 Pop flavor
25 In the distant past
28 Trio after R
29 African language group
30 Eggs
32 Trade ban
34 Mint product
35 Clumsy fleet
36 Homebuyer's option
37 Warnings
40 Capote nickname
41 Showroom model
42 Samoan port
47 Rhett's last word
48 Mythical beasts
49 "The — the limit!"
50 U.K. fliers
51 Scruff

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1 "— Wiedersehen"
2 NBC weekend show
3 In the manner of
4 Actress Anderson
5 Point — return
6 Bad hairpiece
7 Force air through
8 Goddess of wisdom
9 Swank
10 Hide in the bushes
11 Exploits
13 Cellar supply
19 Prego rival
20 Rm. coolers
21 Memorandum
22 Morose
23 Cymbals' kin
25 Delphinium
26 Thug
27 "Metamorphoses" poet
29 Lisa's brother
31 Year, in San Juan
33 Industry tycoons
34 Clipped money-saver
36 Gator's kin
37 Tosses in
38 Plumbing woe
39 TV trophy
40 End-of-wk. cry
43 Literary collection
44 Coach Parseghian
45 Econ. statistic
46 Sugary suffix

Solution time: 26 mins.

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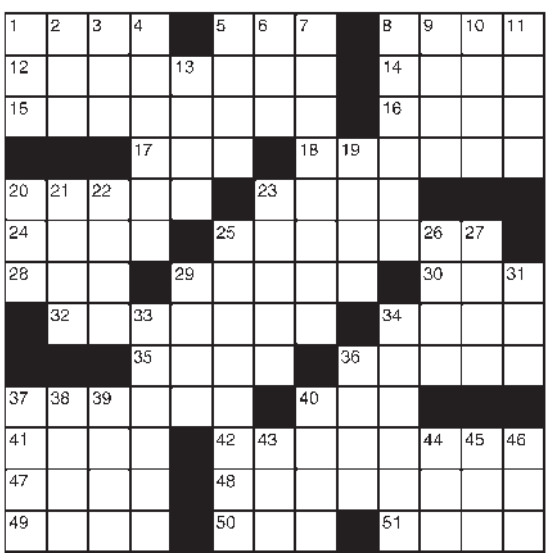
Last Friday's Answer 03-05



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Kevin Connolly, 44; Matt Lucas, 44; Eva Mendes, 44; Dean Stockwell, 82.

Happy Birthday: Step back and look at the big picture. It's important to understand the magnitude of what you are trying to accomplish as a whole and to break it down into doable segments that will fit into your day-to-day schedule. Maintaining balance and integrity, and having the vision and the desire to do something beneficial, will make this year worthwhile. Your numbers are 7, 12, 23, 26, 31, 38, 47.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Don't let impulsiveness get the best of you. Slow down and figure out the right way to handle situations that can affect your reputation or status. Speaking without accurate information will limit how to best move forward. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Take the plunge and get things up and running. Work alone and forego joint financial endeavors. Take pride in what you can do and an opportunity will come your way. Don't try to do the impossible. Protect against injury. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* An opportunity will not be as good as declared. Do your homework before making a commitment that can tie up your time or cost you money. If you want to bring about positive changes, focus on personal growth and educational pursuits. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* You stand to gain if you participate in what's going on around you. Networking functions and taking part in activities that include like-minded people are favored. Romance or personal improvements will highlight your day. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Don't let your generous nature get the best of you. Making others happy can be done without going into debt. The time you spend with the ones you love should be the greatest gift of all. What you provide is secondary. ✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Addressing matters concerning children, seniors and partners will bring about positive changes. An unusual opportunity will lead to personal gain. Get in touch with an old friend or relative, or sign up for an event that will improve your neighborhood. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Sharing personal information or reconnecting with someone from your past will pose a problem for you. Focus on doing a good job and taking care of unfinished business. A compliment you receive could have ulterior motives attached. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* It's time to have some fun, follow your heart and engage in activities that make you happy. Look at your prospects and pursue your dreams. The sky is the limit. If you reach high enough, you will reach your goal. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* You'll be anxious to make some changes to your social life and future plans. Don't let impulsiveness take over. You can only fit so much into your day. Falling short on a promise you made will lead to a negative response. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Don't underestimate others. Just when you think you have agreed on something, someone will make a last-minute change to throw you off guard. Don't give in to something that doesn't work for you. Walk away and do your own thing. ✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* It's up to you to bring about change. Don't wait for someone else to step in and take over. Size up the extent of what needs to be done, make sure your plans are within reason, and move forward with confidence. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Opportunity is knocking and the chance to make a financial gain is within reach. Check out your options, look at your resources and don't get flustered if someone doesn't see things the same way you do. Do your own thing. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are alert, innovative and charming. You are feisty and unpredictable.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

6	2	7				8	3	9
	1			6			2	
			7		9			
		1	5		6	3		
	8			7			9	
		2	9		1	7		
			6		3			
	9			1			8	
7	3	4				9	6	1

Difficulty Level ★ 3/05

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

9	8	3	5	6	2	1	7	4
6	4	7	1	9	3	2	8	5
1	5	2	7	4	8	3	6	9
3	2	6	8	1	4	9	5	7
4	9	8	2	7	5	6	1	3
7	1	5	9	3	6	8	4	2
5	7	1	3	8	9	4	2	6
2	6	9	4	5	1	7	3	8
8	3	4	6	2	7	5	9	1

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 2/27

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

MALCOLM YOUNG (1953-2017) Solution: 13 letters

A	D	A	M	A	R	G	A	R	E	T	T	H	W	G
D	E	G	A	R	E	W	O	P	L	A	Y	I	L	R
N	V	I	S	I	O	N	A	R	Y	U	L	E	A	O
A	O	Y	R	A	D	N	E	G	E	L	T	T	U	U
B	L	A	C	K	I	C	E	W	I	T	I	N	S	P
A	R	D	D	E	P	E	O	A	H	U	S	D	T	W
C	O	N	R	H	R	G	M	E	G	N	N	N	R	L
K	T	I	I	I	S	H	R	G	A	A	O	I	A	I
I	A	L	T	A	T	E	U	I	L	S	T	C	L	F
N	E	E	L	Y	B	H	R	T	A	E	N	S	I	E
B	R	G	H	E	C	B	O	N	R	T	I	T	A	T
L	Ⓒ	R	R	R	R	C	G	S	O	U	L	E	E	S
A	Ⓓ	O	I	O	S	U	A	U	C	K	O	V	S	A
C	Ⓒ	E	F	S	S	E	G	R	U	B	C	I	O	E
K	Ⓐ	G	F	S	A	L	E	X	A	N	D	E	R	B

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ACDC, Adam, Alexander, Angus, Australia, Back in Black, Band, Beast, Black Ice, Brian, Burgess, Cara, Chugg, Colin, Creator, Fans, George, Glasgow, Group, Guitar, Icon, Legendary, Let There Be Rock, Life, Linda, Loved, Margaret, Phil, Play, Powerage, Retire, Rhythm, Riff, Rose, Ross, Scotland, Soul, Stevie, Visionary, William, Writer

Last Friday's Answer: Reserves

To purchase **WONDERWORD** books, visit www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

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(1) Maintenance/cleaner
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Existing work experience is a plus.
Chinese language skill is a plus.
US citizen and Green card preferred.
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(1) Manager
(1) Commercial Cleaner/Stocker
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Existing work experience is a plus.
Chinese language skill is a plus.
US citizen and Green card preferred.
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American Pretty Car Rental
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(2) Commercial Cleaner
7.05-10.05/hour depends on experience.
Existing work experience is a plus.
Chinese language skill is a plus.
US citizen and Green card preferred.
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Submit resume via mail: ahesaipan@gmail.com

American Pretty Tour Corporation
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(1) Manager
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Salty Saipan Corporation

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Cousins' list down to four teams; Quinn to Dolphins

NEW YORK (AP)—Since he's been willing to be patient so far, Kirk Cousins is going to take his time through his free agency process.

But he has apparently pared the list of teams he'll consider.

The final four teams expected to be in the running for his services are the Broncos, Cardinals, Jets, and Vikings.

Each have their own pluses and minuses. The Broncos and Vikings can offer immediate competitiveness thanks to good defenses. The Cardinals offer the opportunity to play with a future Hall of Famer in Larry Fitzgerald and warm weather. The Jets have the major market appeal, along with the most cap space of the group and, well, desperation.

Absent from that list despite their obvious need at the position is Cleveland, despite the best lobbying efforts of left tackle Joe Thomas.

Schefter also reports that the teams involved are considering short-term deals, perhaps as short as three years, with big guarantees. Considering Cousins has played the last two years on the tag for Washington, he has a flexibility not every free agent enjoys.

And the dynamics of the pursuit of Cousins will have impacts far beyond his own future, as quarterbacks such as Aaron Rodgers, Drew Brees, and Matt Ryan are working on new deals, and the fallback plans such as Case Keenum and others hinge to some degree on the choice Cousins make and the numbers involved.

In Miami, the Dolphins can't wait to improve their pass rush.

Miami agreed to acquire Los Angeles Rams edge rusher Robert Quinn for a mid-round draft pick, a person familiar with the deal said Friday. The person confirmed the agreement to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because under NFL rules, no 2018 trades can be completed until March 14.

Quinn has 62+ career sacks, including 8+ last year, when he started 14 games. He spent his first six NFL seasons with the Rams at end but played outside linebacker last season.

Quinn is expected to bolster a Dolphins pass rush that was disappointing in 2017. They had 30 sacks, tied for sixth fewest, and ranked fifth worst in opposing passer rating, which helped explain their 6-10 record.

Miami's other defensive ends include 36-year-old Cameron Wake, Andre Branch and 201 first-round draft pick Charles Harris.

Quinn, the 14th pick of the 2011 draft, made the Pro Bowl in 2013 and 2014. He struggled with injuries in 2015, eventually having season-ending back surgery, and a concussion limited him to nine games in 2016.

He's due a base salary of $10 million this year and is under contract through 2019.

In New Orleans, two people familiar with the situation say the Saints and free-agent safety Kurt Coleman have agreed to terms of a three-year contract.

The people spoke to The Associated Press on Saturday on condition of anonymity because the roster move has not been announced.

The 29-year-old Coleman is an eight-year veteran out of Ohio State who played the past three seasons for Carolina.

He started in all 12 games in which he played last season and made 76 solo or assisted tackles. He also recovered a fumble.

Coleman joins a roster that includes safeties Vonn Bell and Marcus Williams, and his addition raises the prospects that fellow safety Kenny Vaccaro, who is set to become a free agent this offseason, won't return to New Orleans, where he began his career in 2013.

AP

In this Dec. 31, 2017, file photo, Washington Redskins quarterback Kirk Cousins (8) exchanges high-fives with fans as he enters the stadium during an NFL football game against the New York Giants, in East Rutherford, N.J.

Bradley Chubb makes case to be Top 5 pick

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Bradley Chubb would normally be content relying on game tapes to make his case to scouts.

There, he insists, they will find a big man with edge-rushing skills and enough power to stuff the run. Watch enough of footage and it just might convince those NFL executives that Chubb is the best defensive player in this year's NFL draft.

But this is no typical week for North Carolina State's star defensive end. He's participating in the NFL's annual scouting combine in Indianapolis, answering questions and dropping names.

"I try to take Khalil Mack and Von Miller and put them into one person," Chubb said Saturday. "I'm a high-motor, high-energy guy."

If team executives concur, his name could be one of the first three called in April.

Naturally, Chubb describes himself as the best player in Indy this weekend and who's going to argue with a 6-foot-4, 269-pound man.

Not the deep, diverse quarterback group, which did its on-the-field workouts Saturday and will likely spend the next few years trying to escape Chubb's grasp.

Not the highly touted running back class, which includes Saquon Barkley and Chubb's own cousin, Nick, who will be running away from a lineman who posted 25 sacks and 54+ tackles for loss over the past three seasons.

Sure, there are questions.

Is he big enough to hold up against the NFL's massive tackles, does he have enough moves to make an immediate impact, can he make a smooth transition to the more physical pro game?

He might also be asked to explain why he spat upon the Florida State logo following North Carolina State's upset win or why he decided to skip the Wolfpack's bowl game.

Those who know Chubb best have no doubt he will succeed.

"He's so happy, always smiling," said offensive tackle Will Richardson, a college teammate who routinely squared off with Chubb in practice.

"He's a goofball. We used to get grapes after a game and he would come over and knock them out of your hands and someone would be like `Why did you do that?' But he always had a few extra grapes in his other hand to give to you. He's definitely a goofball, a goofball in a good way."

Many believe there's nothing goofy about him being possibly the best pass-rusher in a draft heavy on interior linemen—and thin at one of the NFL's most coveted positions.

Those challenging Chubb's title include Marcus Davenport of UTSA, Sam Hubbard of Ohio State, Arden Key of LSU and Harold Landry of Boston College.

Each had college careers that ranged from solid to spectacular, and each knows they must answer questions about size, injuries or the competition level they've faced.

"Nobody in this draft class has a first step like mine," Landry said. "My mindset and my approach to the game, I'm a guy that's going to do whatever it takes to be the best at my position."

Woods adds Valspar tourney to his road to Masters

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Tiger Woods is adding another tournament to his schedule on his road to the Masters.

Woods decided Friday to play in the Valspar Championship next week at Innisbrook, along with the Arnold Palmer Invitational at Bay Hill the following week. It was another strong signal about the health of his surgically fused lower back, giving him four tournaments in five weeks.

Woods tweeted that he committed to play both tournaments after a "good recovery week."

He has never played the Valspar Championship in Palm Harbor, Florida, though Woods has played Innisbrook. Three months after he turned pro in 1996, Woods paired with Kelli Kuehne in the now-defunct JC Penney Mixed-Team Classic. They finished third.

Innisbrook became part of the PGA Tour schedule in 2000. The Copperhead course is regarded by some players as one of the best tournament layouts in Florida because of the hilly terrain, tree-lined fairways and water that comes into play only on seven of the 18 holes. It is the only PGA Tour stop in Florida that does not feature water on the 18th hole.

From the time Woods returned—first at his unofficial Hero World Challenge in the Bahamas last December and then when he resumed a PGA Tour schedule—he has said he was trying to ready his game for Augusta National.

Woods has missed the Masters three of the last four years because of four back operations, the most recent a fusion surgery last April. His latest return as been promising with a tie for 23rd at Torrey Pines (seven shots behind) and 12th place at the Honda Classic (eight shots behind). He missed the cut at Riviera, where he never won even at his best.

"I need to keep playing tournaments," Woods said after the Honda Classic. "But I need to keep building on it, keep building my body, keep building toward April. That was the goal when I first came back—try and get everything situated for April. And I feel like I'm right on track for that."

Woods is an eight-time winner at Bay Hill, where he has not played since he won in 2013.

The Valspar Championship often gets overlooked in the Florida swing because it competes for players against the Honda Classic and Arnold Palmer Invitational, and previously a World Golf Championship at Doral.

Now it has its most appealing collection of players. Along with Woods, players who also have entered include Rory McIlroy for the first time, Jordan Spieth, Justin Rose, Sergio Garcia and Henrik Stenson.

Nuggets hit 19 treys to roll past Cavaliers

CLEVELAND (AP)—Gary Harris scored 32 points, Will Barton added 23 and the Denver Nuggets did most of their damage behind the 3-point arc in a 126-117 win over LeBron James and the Cleveland Cavaliers on Saturday night.

The Nuggets made 19 of 35 3-pointers, including three in the final 2:26, to hold off a second-half charge from the Cavs, who are struggling as they try to blend in four new players on the fly.

James finished with 25 points, 15 assists and 10 rebounds— his 13th triple-double this season—but Cleveland's lack of a dependable No. 2 scorer with Kevin Love out with a broken left hand continues to be a major problem.

More troublesome, though, is the Cavs' defense or lack of it. Whenever Denver needed a big basket, the Nuggets got it by making the extra pass and exploiting holes in Cleveland's defense.

J.R. Smith scored 19 points—all in the second half—in his return from a one-game suspension for throwing a bowl of soup on Cavs assistant coach Damon Jones. With Smith and James carrying the scoring load, the Cavs pulled within 115-114 with 2:40 left.

But the Nuggets came right back as Paul Millsap drilled a 3-pointer and Harris made two more from outside to put it away. Jamal Murray and Wilson Chandler added 16 points apiece for the Nuggets, who are 9-3 since Feb. 1.

Larry Nance Jr. gave the Cavs a needed lift in the second quarter with a vicious dunk.

Catching a pass on the baseline, Nance, who recently participated in the dunk contest during All-Star weekend, took one dribble, cocked his arm and posterized Mason Plumlee. The slam brought James and several other amazed Cavs onto the floor to celebrate.

The Nuggets, though, weren't fazed.

Harris and Barton knocked down 3-pointers and Denver pushed its lead to 14 and was up 73-62 at halftime.

Trail Blazers 108, Thunder 100

In Portland, during their recent upswing, the Portland Trail Blazers have received key contributions from several role players. It was Zach Collins' turn Saturday night.

The rookie forward had a career-high 12 points, including a key 3-pointer down the stretch, as the Blazers earned a victory over the Oklahoma City Thunder.

"It was good, but more importantly, we've got to win right now. I've got to go out there and make sure I do my job to where, with that second unit, we don't let anything slip and we make sure we sustain the lead or we push it," said Collins, the 10th pick in last year's NBA draft out of Gonzaga.

CJ McCollum scored 28 points and Damian Lillard added 20 in Portland's sixth straight victory. The win left the Blazers alone in third place in the crowded Western Conference, while the Thunder dropped to seventh.

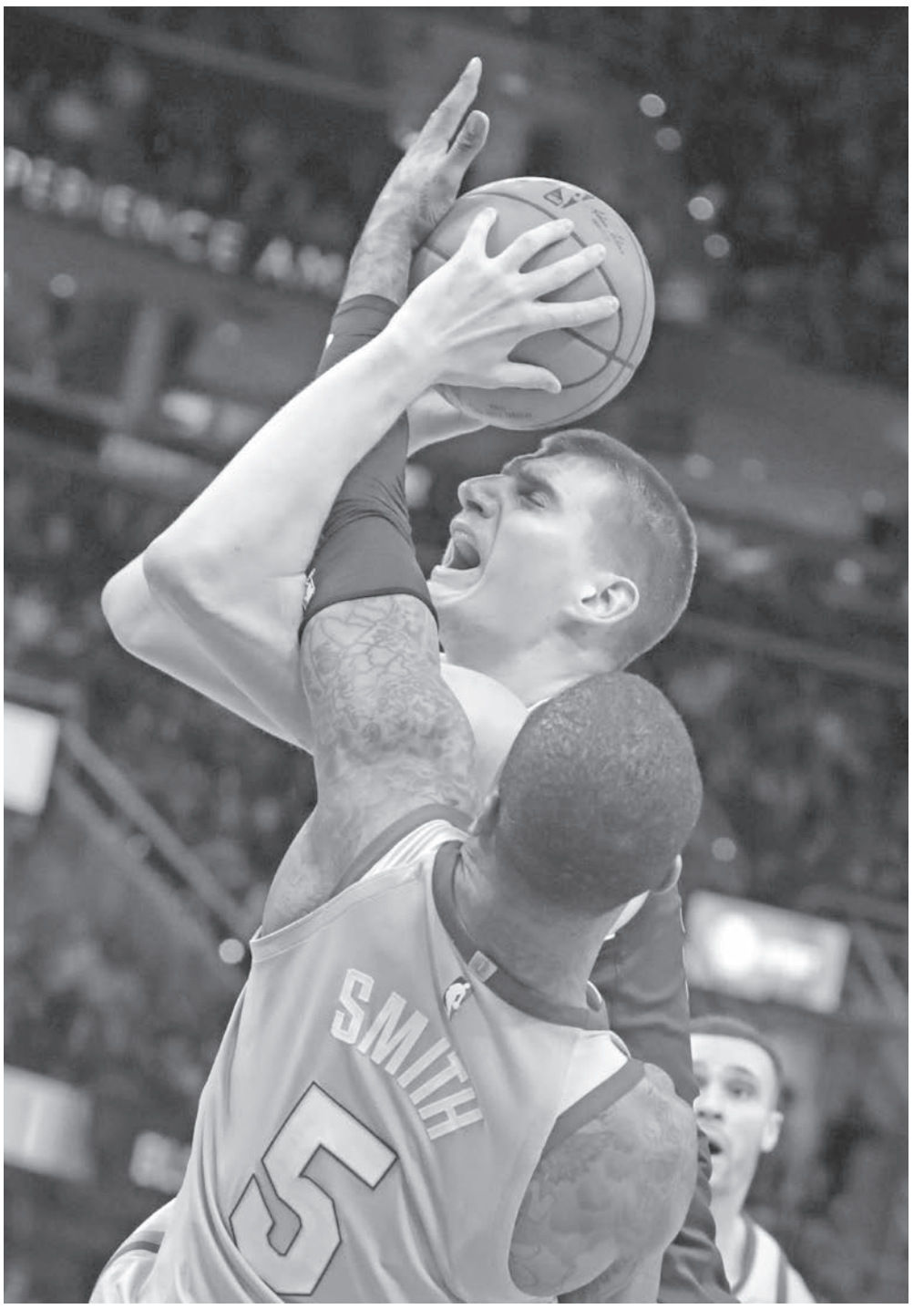
Rockets 123, Celtics 120

In Houston, Eric Gordon scored 29 points off the bench, James Harden had 26 points and 10 assists, and Houston outlasted Boston to extend its winning streak to a season-high 15 games.

Houston trailed by six before using a 10-2 run, with the last five points coming from Trevor Ariza, to take a 117-115 lead with 1:16 remaining. Ariza made a 3-pointer before stealing the ball from Kyrie Irving and finishing with a basket on the other end to cap the run.

Al Horford missed shots on Boston's next two possessions before Chris Paul made two free throws with 15 seconds left to push the lead to four. Irving made a layup seconds later, but Harden made one of two free throws with 7.4 seconds left to make it 120-117.

Irving and Paul hit two free throws each before Irving made one and purposely missed the second with 2.8 seconds left. Gordon made one of two free throws to make it 123-120 with 2.3 seconds remaining, and Marcus Smart's 3-point attempt bounced off the rim at the buzzer.



AP

Denver Nuggets' Nikola Jokic shoots against Cleveland Cavaliers' JR Smith in the second half of an NBA basketball game, Saturday, March 3, 2018, in Cleveland. The Nuggets won, 126-117.

Lakers 116, Spurs 112

In San Antonio, Lonzo Ball hit a career-best six 3-pointers, Julius Randle had 25 points and Los Angeles rallied in the final two minutes to beat San Antonio.

Ball made three shots from beyond the arc in the final three minutes to give the Lakers their fifth straight victory. Ball finished with 18 points, and Isaiah Thomas added 21 points.

The Spurs lost their second straight game in which they never trailed until the final two minutes.

Ball's fourth 3-pointer cut San Antonio's lead to 105-104, and Randle made two free throws to give Los Angeles its first lead at 106-105 with 1:59 remaining. After a jumper by Pau Gasol, Ball hit another 3 to give the Lakers a 109-107 advantage with 1:15 remaining. After Gasol made two free throws to tie it, Ball hit another 3 to stun the Spurs' fans and electrify a large Lakers' contingent.

Heat 105, Pistons 96

In Miami, Kelly Olynyk and Josh Richardson each scored 17 points, and Miami enhanced its playoff hopes with a win over Detroit.

James Johnson scored 14 points, Goran Dragic and Justise Winslow each had 13 and Dwyane Wade added 11 for Miami. Hassan Whiteside grabbed 19 rebounds for the Heat, who won for only the fourth time in their last 13 games.

Blake Griffin scored 31 points and Andre Drummond finished with 22 points and 18 rebounds for the Pistons, who were playing their fifth game in seven nights—four of those on the road.

Magic 107, Grizzlies 100

In Orlando, Evan Fournier broke a tie on a long 3-pointer with 22.5 seconds left, and Orlando rookie Jonathan Isaac helped preserve the lead with his third block of the game in a win that stretched Memphis' losing streak to 13 games.

Fournier added two free throws with 8.2 seconds remaining to finish with 19 points. Nikola Vucevic also scored 19 for Orlando, which had six players in double figures.

Ben McLemore scored a game-high 20 for Memphis, which has the NBA's longest skid of the season. Jarell Martin added 19 points and 11 rebounds.

Jazz 98, Kings 91

In Sacramento, Utah coach Quin Snyder couldn't stop praising his team's defense after the Jazz limited Sacramento to four second-chance points.

It was their inconsistency that bothered Snyder, a small asterisk on an otherwise strong night.

Donovan Mitchell scored eight of his 27 points in the fourth quarter and the Jazz beat the Kings.

"We got a couple leads and we gave it back to them, frankly," Snyder said. "We have to be able to maintain a certain level throughout the course of the game and stay at that level and be more consistent during the whole 48 minutes."

Rudy Gobert had another double-double with 16 points and 12 rebounds for the Jazz..

Cavs may find Love sooner than expected

INDEPENDENCE, Ohio (AP)— As the Cavaliers experience growing pains with four new players, relief might be ahead: Kevin Love.

The All-Star forward, sidelined since Jan. 29 with a broken left hand, said Friday he could return sooner than expected. The initial timetable was for him to be out two months.

"If I can get back before eight weeks, great," he said. "So I'm hoping that that is the case."

Love's recovery has picked up speed in recent days. He's now able to catch the ball with a padded glove to protect his left hand, and the progress is such that there's less risk for re-injury.

"One of the things I can do now is kind of catch the ball, guide it and shoot it within 12-15 feet so that feels good to do something other than run on the treadmill or run on the bike so it's nice," he said.

The Cavaliers have been transformed since the last time Love played, with their roster overhauled by three trades before the deadline. Cleveland is just 3-4 since adding guards George Hill, Jordan Clarkson and forwards Rodney Hood and Larry Nance Jr. But Love has been encouraged by the infusion of talent and is excited about the team's prospects once he returns.

Reduced to a role of interested observer, Love has watched as coach Tyronn Lue force feeds numerous offensive sets and defensive principles to players who began the season in different systems. The new-look Cavs have had some great moments, and more than a few tough ones.

Following Thursday's home loss to Philadelphia, Lue said he planned to simplify things for his new players. On Friday, the Cavs watched film and afterward Lue said he's still confident his club will mesh.

"I feel good about this team," Lue said. "No doubt about it. We got a lot of young talent. We got a lot of good pieces. We're just trying to figure it out, put it together. We've only played seven games right now and those guys are still trying to figure it out."

There will be another adjustment when Love returns, but it won't be as if Lue has to re-teach him how to play with LeBron James, J.R. Smith and Tristan Thompson, the four players remaining from Cleveland's 2016 NBA title team.

The Cavs may not be the same, but Love believes they remain strong.

"We have guys who have been here and know exactly what to expect moving forward," said Love, who is averaging 17.9 points, 9.4 rebounds and shooting 40 percent on 3-pointers. "So it's on us to bring everybody along and have veteran guys push maybe the younger guys or the new guys through the process. ...

Nearly 800 runners sign up for Saipan Marathon

SAIPAN TRIBUNE
Runners head out to the course during the 2016 Saipan Marathon. The 2018 edition of Marianas Visitors Authority's signature event will hit the road this Saturday.

More sponsors are backing up Saipan Marathon 2018 that will hit the road this Saturday, lending their support to the Marianas Visitors Authority to make the annual signature event a major draw for international runners.

As of last count, 780 runners had registered for the race.

"Last year we had 599 runners registered for the marathon," said MVA acting managing director Judy Torres. "Now that Saipan Marathon is certified by AIMS, we have a tremendous opportunity to attract more runners. This year we are giving away over $22,000 in cash prizes. We want to give a big thank you to all the sponsors and supporters coming onboard to make the Saipan Marathon even bigger and better than ever."

The marathon is certified by the International Association of Athletic Federations through the Association of International Marathons and Distance Races.

Major sponsors this year are Delta Airlines, the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands, DFS Saipan Limited, and Northern Marianas Athletics.

Platinum sponsors are IT&E, donating $5,000 and Hyatt Regency Saipan, donating over $4,000 in gift certificates. Gold sponsors are Ideal Signs, donating $3,000 and HK Express, donating $2,000. Silver sponsors are Pacific Insurance, J.C. Tenorio Enterprises, Serenti Hotel, Hana Tour Service Inc., Taiwan Rainbow Wings Inc., and BARREL (Korea), each donating $1,000. Saipan Beach Hotel and Kanoa Resort round out the list of Silver sponsors.

Aid stations will be manned by Mariana Resort & Spa, Kensington Hotel Saipan, Aqua Resort Club, Hyatt Regency Saipan, Imperial Pacific Int'l, Pacific Development Inc., Tasi Tours, Fiesta Resort & Spa, Kanoa Resort, Saipan World Resort, IT&E, Coral Ocean Golf Resort, and Pacific Islands Club Saipan.

The event is also supported by Dept. of Public Safety, Dept. of Fire & Emergency Medical Services, Dept. of Public Works, Dept. of Public Lands, Div. of Parks & Grounds, Saipan Mayor's Office, Hawaiian Rock Products, and Marianas Health Services.

Registration by March 8 for the 50K and marathon is $95 for U.S. and CNMI participants, and $85 for half marathon and 10K participants. The fee for high school and junior high school students will be $55. The last day to register for the event will be on March 8, too. Registration will include the awards banquet, a finishers T-shirt, and a certificate of completion.

All competitors are required to pick up their race packets in person on March 9, from 4pm to 6pm at American Memorial Park, without exception. The races will start and finish at Micro Beach with the 50K event beginning at 4:30am, the full marathon at 5am, the half marathon at 5:30am, and the 10K at 6am. The cut-off time for the 50K and marathon will be 9:30am with runners in these event should be near the intersection of Navy Hill and Chalan Pale Arnold Road to continue their races.

Cash payments are accepted only at the MVA office located in San Jose, Saipan. For a direct link to the on-line registration site or for more information, contact Diaz at 1-670-664-3210 or send email to ediaz@mymarianas.com. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

FALCONS

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Gonzales' RBI single. Then in the fifth inning, the Mike Cruz-coached Falcons took three more runs on base on ball and off an RBI single each from Achilles Evangelista and Chris Pangelinan.

The Falcons registered the combined nine runs in the pivotal fourth and fifth inning against three Pirates pitchers.

The Pirates, before their pitching meltdown, led after three complete innings, 4-2, thanks to Charley McDonald's two-run homer at the bottom of the third and Noah Iguel's RBI single in the second. The Falcons, posted their first two runs off Gonzales' RBI single in the first and Noah Aguon's run off an error in the third.

After a slow start, the Falcons then got their rhythm with the help of the Pirates' erratic job on the mound to grab the lead. The Falcons' defense also stepped up, with Aguon taking over from Gonzales at the bottom of the fourth and delivering three strikeouts in that period, while stranding a Pirates runner at third base.

Aguon tallied two more strikeouts in the fifth inning and left a Pirates runner at first. Then in the sixth inning, with the Pirates pressured to score eight runs to win the game, Aguon made up for a single he gave to Destiny Pangelinan and an RBI single to Memrino Eliesar by striking out Iguel and Joey Dela Cruz to end the match. Eliesar was earlier caught out at second base for the second out.

Besides his steady performance on the mound, the Falcons closer also scored three runs for the winning team, while Alfonso Taitano and Leandre Sablan added two each.

Meanwhile, the Braves got off to a strong start to beat Bank of Saipan, 19-12.

The Braves logged seven runs at the top of the first—five earned—against only one from Bank of Saipan to take control of the game.

Bank of Saipan tried to mount a comeback, as it collected 11 runs in the third and fourth inning to move within two, 12-14, however the Braves retained the driver's seat after countering with five runs in the sixth and shutting down their foes in the last two.

Jylon Sablan, who closed out for the Braves after relieving Angel Igitol, had a rough time in the fourth inning, but redeemed himself in the fifth and sixth. He pitched 1-2-3 at the bottom of the fifth and struck out Bank of Saipan's leadoff batter Jess Stole in the sixth before walking Ezra Ada. He then fanned out Kian Helgen to set up the game-ending double play, as catcher Joel Borja threw to Igitol at second base and the latter tagged out Ada.

ATALIG

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has a game after prevailing against Frederico Flores and fellow veteran Tony Satur.

In the Ladies Flight, Jeon Me Ae was the top finisher in the Low Gross category, while Yuri Kim won the Low Net category against Noriko Togawa. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, left, and Senate President Arnold Palacios are among the supporters of last Saturday's 15th Annual NMC Foundation Open Golf Tournament held on the west course of the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort.

FIESTA

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Schmidt, who spent a lot of time on the bench in the third quarter due to an injury, returned in the payoff canto and scored 8 straight points to help Kanoa Resort grab the lead, 63-60. The fourth canto started with Fiesta ahead, 60-55, and the eventual champion squad led by as much as 10 in the third canto, taking advantage on the absence of Schmidt.

Then after getting caught off guard by Schmidt in the opening minutes of the fourth, Fiesta answered with a back-breaking 14-0 scoring surge to reclaim the upper hand. Lerio Pagarao delivered the killer blows for Fiesta, as he drilled 12 points in that run, while Arjay Nonato tallied the other field goal.

Now behind, 74-63, and with its title on the line, Schmidt tried to lead Kanoa Resort's final push when he knocked in back-to-back triples. However, that was not enough to bring Kanoa Resort back into the game and it did not help his squad cause that he lacked support from his teammates.

Schmidt scored all of Kanoa Resort's 16 points in the fourth quarter, while his teammates muffed crucial baskets one after another in the closing minutes of the finale. Fiesta Resort, on the other hand, drew 2 points each from Fradel Sedillo and Elmer Esdrelon to seal the title win.

Pagarao top-scored for Fiesta with his 26 points and got a lot of help from his teammates and that made the difference in the game. Esdrelon chipped in 18, Paul Quizon contributed 16, while Sedillo and Nonato combined for 14 more markers.

Dindo Pablo was the only other double-figure scorer for Kanoa Resort with his 18 points, but he was held to two field goals in the second half. The other players who made it to Kanoa Resort's box scores earned no more than one field goal.

Meanwhile, in the battle for third place, Shirley's Coffee Shop eased past *Saipan Tribune*, 77-59.

Duncan Laxa peppered *Saipan Tribune* with triples to hand Shirley's the Top 3 finish. Laxa buried five triples to end up with a game-high 33 markers. Keeanu Diaz, John Jugos, and Junar Guiab backed him up, as all three scored in twin digits in Shirley's easy win.

Almond Edralin led *Saipan Tribune's* losing cause after recording 18 points. *Saipan Tribune* faced a 12-point deficit in the first half, but managed to recover and even took the lead at the break, 36-34, before falling behind anew in the second half, as it failed to contain Shirley's gunners and matched its opponent's hot shooting.

Finals

Fiesta Resort 78 — Pagarao 26, Esdrelon 18, Quizon 16, Nonato 8, Sedillo 6, Arreza 3, Francisco 2, Demafelix 1.

Kanoa Resort 71 — Schmidt 41, Pablo 18, Bustillo 5, Tam 2, Encarnacion 2, Lumauag 2, Francisco 1.

Scoring by quarters: 18-19, 40-32, 60-55, 78-711.

Consolation

Shirley's 77 — Laxa 33, Diaz 16, Jugos 11, Guaib 11, Alonzo 3, Bordon 2.

Saipan Tribune 59 — Edralin 18, Lapus 10, Orbeta 7, Rabago 6, Calayag 5, De La Torre 4, M. Ong 2, J. Ong 2.

Scoring by halves: 34-36, 77-59.

2018 NMIFA Spring Youth League

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

A Matansa Football Club, right, player goes for a header, while a TanHoldings FC-2 defender attempts to deflect the ball during their co-ed U13 division game in the 2018 NMIFA Spring Youth League at the Hopwood Middle School Field.

Kanoa-1's Markus Toves, left, reaches in for the ball,

MP United FC's Richard Castro, right, faces a Kanoa FC-2 defender on his away to scoring a goal.

A TanHoldings-1 player kicks the ball, while his two teammates look on.

A TanHoldings FC-2 player makes a throw-in.

A TanHoldings-1 player chases the ball.

Kanoa-1's Markus Toves, left, battles a TanHoldings-1 player for possession.

It's two against one, as MP United players engage a Kanoa-2 player in a foot race for the ball.

Cousins' list down to four teams; Quinn to Dolphins

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Sports

Nuggets hit 19 treys to roll past Cavaliers

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
J.J. Atalig gestures before heading out to the west course of the Laolao Bay Golf Resort to compete in the Championship Flight of the 15th Annual NMC Foundation Open Golf Tournament held last Saturday.

Atalig leads NMC Open winners

J.J. Atalig won the Championship Flight in the 15th Annual NMC Foundation Open Golf Tournament held last Saturday on the west course of the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort.

Atalig defeated Ryan Kim and junior golfer Dong Young Lee in the centerpiece division of the fundraiser, which aims to help the NMC Foundation implement its various programs.

The Top 3 finishers in the Championship Flight were among the 140 golfers that participated in the annual tournament.

"We are grateful for the overwhelming support from sponsors, golfers, and volunteers in making the 15th Annual NMC Foundation Open a very successful event. It was a great day of golf and we are happy to have had our governor and senate president also support the event by golfing," NMC president Carmen Fernandez said.

In other results, Norman Tenorio Jr. led the winners in A Flight. Dong Kyu Lee and Jeong Jaeyeol joined Tenorio on the podium with the latter receiving $500 top prize. Dong Kyu Lee and Jaeyeol settled for $300 and $200, respectively.

In the B Flight, Sung Man Cho took the first place honors after beating Prescil Azarco and Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan's Das Krishnan. In the C Flight, Kwang Joong Kim led the Top 3 finishers and was joined at the awards ceremony by Ray Santos and Scott Shular.

For the Seniors Flight, many-time CNMI national team member Joe "Kamikaze" Camacho proved he still

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Fiesta Resort reclaims crown

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Fiesta Resort's Paul Quizon, center, tries to dribble away from the defense of Kanoa Resort's Sonny Encarnacion, left, and Ricky Bustillo during their title game in the 2017 Tan Holdings Inter-Company Basketball League last Friday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan regained the crown it lost to Kanoa Resort last season following a 78-71 victory in their title rematch in the 2017 Tan Holdings Inter-Company Basketball League last Friday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

Fiesta Resort withstood Kanoa Resort's early run in the fourth quarter and hung tough down the stretch to prevail in the winner-take-all finals and spoil Douglas Schmidt's 41-point explosion for the dethroned champion.

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Falcons bring down Pirates

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The Falcons capitalized on the Pirates' struggles on the mound in the closing stages of their Majors division game in the 2018 Saipan Little League Baseball to score an 11-5 victory yesterday at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield.

The Falcons had nine runs at the top of the fourth and fifth inning, turning a 2-4 deficit to an 11-4 advantage en route to their third win in as many games. The Falcons got two runs in the fourth off a wild pitch and base on ball, while the two others were courtesy of Christopher

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO
A Falcons runner gets ready to run from second to third base, while a Pirates pitcher throws from the mound during their Majors division game in the 2018 Saipan Little League Baseball yesterday at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield.